THE PRIVATE LETTER-BOOKS OF SIR WALTER SCOTT

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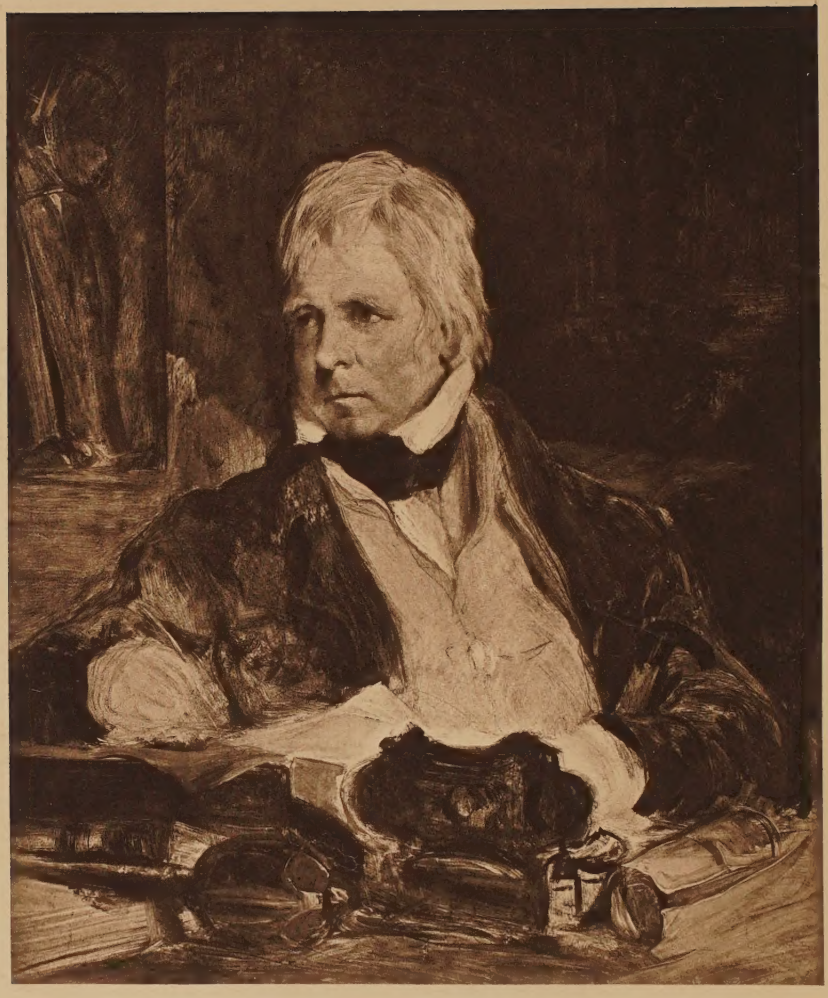
THE PRIVATE LETTER-BOOKS OF SIR WALTER SCOTT



Sir Walter Scott

from an unfinished portrait by Edwin Landseer
painted at Abbotsford in 1824
now in the National Portrait Gallery

Emery Walker Ltd. ph.sc.

THE PRIVATE LETTER-BOOKS
OF
SIR WALTER SCOTT

SELECTIONS FROM THE ABBOTSFORD MANUSCRIPTS ✱ WITH A LETTER TO THE READER FROM HUGH WALPOLE

Edited by
WILFRED PARTINGTON

"They . . will be one day curious . . these confidential papers."—Scott in his Diary, Aug. 1827.

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A LETTER TO THE READER

BRACKENBURN,

MY DEAR READER,— October 24th, 1929.

I should begin, I suppose, by telling the story of the way in which these six thousand letters to Scott came first into my possession.

The odd thing is that I have no exact recollection of the event itself. It was one of the really joyful and successful days of my life—a day of which I had every right to be proud: and yet I can remember nothing at all about it! I *can* recall, clearly enough, the morning when I read in "The Times" that these Letter-Books would shortly appear in the Sotheby auction rooms. I remember that I had but recently returned from America, and that I had some money in my pocket. Was it possible that I would be able to afford them? Surely not! There were letters, so "The Times" said, of Lamb's and Byron's and Goethe's. The interest spread far beyond the actual Scott connection. Surely every millionaire in America would be on their track, and the dread but kindly presence of Mr. Rosenbach would snuff out my poor little efforts as he would snuff a candle!

But at the moment of reading that "Times" paragraph I felt, I remember, a kind of premonitory touch on my shoulder of Fate's finger. I felt that there was something of destiny in this. I had always had an entirely unjustified unsupported confidence in my close personal intimacy with Scott. It had begun in my very early schooldays when I had two assured beliefs: one, that I was the rightful heir to an Earldom from which I was most wickedly held by base conspirators; the other, that, in a previous incarnation, I had been an old bookseller in Edinburgh, and that Scott had often visited my shop.

I cannot even now, when I should have reached years of sober discretion, quite rid myself of the second of these two superstitions. I know exactly the corner of the street where my shop was; I can see its dusky, musty corners and myself, bent of back, spectacles on the end of my nose, balanced on a ladder while, among high shelves, I search for the volume that my customer with his high-

domed forehead, his limp, and his stick, abides—a little sarcastically —my cautious deliberations. This is the more impertinent in that I have not, so far as I know, a drop of Scottish blood in my veins. But there it is. In these days scientists can rid one of almost everything—of one's beliefs, one's body, one's entire personality—but not as yet, thank Heaven, of one's favourite dreams.

So, all my life, I had been acquiring my Scottiana—ever since the day when, eight or nine years of age, I bought for a penny Mr. Stead's little smelly yellow and minutely printed edition of *The Talisman*. And because of these acquisitions, because of my Edinburgh book-shop and my life-long devotion, I had the conceited belief that Scott himself would like me to become the possessor of these Letters, and I promised him (even as I looked at "The Times" paragraph) that did I become their owner they should be left by me intact at my death to the National Library of Scotland —truly their proper ultimate home.

It happened that about this time I had forsworn Book Auction Rooms for evermore. I had been first introduced to them at a Red Cross Sale during the War when my friend Gerald du Maurier and I bid at the same time for a first edition of Lewis's *Monk*, and he, in the kindness of his heart, was bidding for *me* (because I was new to the business); and so we went on gaily bidding against one another without knowing it!

Well, after that afternoon Hodgsons' and Sothebys' were worse than Drink to me. I could not keep out of them. It seemed to me miraculous that there should be places out of Fairyland where one might acquire whole bundles of books for sixpence! And soon, as a natural result of this dram-drinking, my small flat began to swell with books. As fast as I got rid of them more arrived; and although I was in a heady heated state of excited happiness, it was plain enough that this state of things could not last.

I must, I saw quite clearly, buy only the books that I really wanted. And so on every occasion I went to the Auction in the quiet, most restrained manner, knowing exactly what I wanted and determined on only that. But alas! as soon as I was inside and saw all those glorious bargains on every side of me, my passions were too much for me. It was so easy, so desperately easy, to nod one's head; and there was, too, a heart-breaking pathos about those books that nobody wanted. I could see them blushing with shame, shyness, and chagrin. If no one else would be kind to them, why then I must!

So, realising one at least of the weaknesses of my inflammable

nature, I decided that Sothebys' and Hodgsons' should see me no more. And they did not. I stuck to my resolution. That visit to Sothebys' when the Abbotsford Correspondence became mine was positively my last. I have never been to a Book Auction since !

And that is, unhappily, all that I can remember about the Great Day. I don't know whether it was wet or fine, whether there was a crowd. I have a sort of impression that no one else was there at all except an elderly man with an indifferent and weary expression, the Auctioneer, and myself. The Weary Man agreed to ' Tuppence,' I nodded it up to ' Threepence,' he jumped to ' Sixpence,' I clinched it at ' A shilling '—and there you are !

Whatever I paid for the Collection then I was lucky to get it, lucky not only in the commercial sense but also very especially in the personal one. As to the commercial side of it, I would blush to say how much I have been offered since that day if I would but divide the Letter-Books up, and sell the more important letters. For this at least I may be allowed perhaps some personal satisfaction. If I had not acquired them it is almost certain that they *would* have been broken up and scattered—to the four winds of the libraries of the world !

Indeed, keeping them safe for the National Library does pay off at last one small private debt of my own. When, years ago, I bought a number of Scott's own letters in San Francisco (some seventy or so) and the fact was, most unpleasantly for me, reported in many papers, Mr. H. M. Tomlinson (on whose shadow be for ever peace) wrote an article in " The Nation " expostulating at the disgusting methods of self-advertisement adopted by pushing young novelists. Dear me ! How that article hurt me ! I had been so exceedingly proud of buying the letters, vowing with a sort of Round Table fervour to keep them together, safe and sacred for posterity. I had never a dream that the transaction would be in the Press at all. And here was Tomlinson. . . Well, well, Tomlinson and I are friends now ; and the time is past, I fear, for me to be called a " pushing young " anything. But here at any rate I am, with one hand on the door of the National Library, and with the other, fingers to nose, making a triumphant gesture at the author of *The Sea and the Jungle.*

The Letter-Books, then, travelled up to Cumberland and settled themselves, as though to acquire an immortal dust, behind the door of a white cupboard over Derwentwater. The dust did not, indeed, settle. I looked at the precious things again and again. For seven years now I have poked about among those faded yellow

sheets, and traced out those many almost undecipherable characters, No telling of it can give any notion of the odd spirit of the Time that creeps out of the heart of those six thousand letters. This is in no way a matter of sentiment. I know how sentimental even very good essayists can be over bundles of old letters tied in their faded pink ribbon ; whereas, as a matter of honest fact, everyone knows that old letters are the most tiresome, disappointing, irritating things in the universe—old letters connected with oneself at least.

But here, without any sentimentality at all, a whole epoch is recovered. The very casualness of them adds to the effect. You are back, moving idly about town and country, and coming with all the accidental haphazard of life against simply anyone at all. Among all the six thousand there are, of course, many that must be, to almost any reader at this distance of time, exceedingly dull ; but plunge into them anywhere, feel yourself back in that age, and even the dreariest letter begins to have the oddest actuality. It is, I assure you, as though Sir Walter himself were at your side, chuckling at one, bursting into anecdote at another, gravely considering the rights and wrongs of a third.

What time men had to waste a hundred years ago ! is one's first thought. The length of these epistles and the serious energy that everyone was able to afford over the merest trifles ! And yet those were stirring Times. From the French Revolution to the Reform Bill ! Nevertheless a fragment of a ballad, a decision about tree-felling, the drinking of a dish of tea—these things deserve three pages of letter-paper at least !

And now that I had got them what was I to do with them ? I had myself neither the leisure nor the discriminating orderly brain needed for the compiling of a selection of them. And yet a selection ought to be compiled ! All this new life resurrected, so fresh, and lively, and illustrative. What a crime to keep it buried !

It was here that Mr. Wilfred Partington came in. From the lucky moment when he first poked a nose casually into a volume the solution was discovered ! This selection represents six years' labours on his part ; and it represents also, I think, a wise and, if I may say so, a merry judgment. Looking back, there were two things, I remember, that I most especially wanted his selection to convey. One was that strangely interesting and most unusual *haphazard* sense of the period that is, for myself, the special colour of the whole collection. When you open one of these volumes,

you never know, as I have already said, upon what you may be hitting next.

And the other thing that I wanted was that the selection should convey something of the wide generosity and nobility of Sir Walter Scott's spirit. So much has been said and written already about this same spirit, and the source of it has been always and most naturally derived from Lockhart's *Life*. But here in these letters written, not by himself but by other men and women, the same spirit again shines out, and it shines out the more markedly because it is the witness always of others, never of himself.

These were the two elements that I wanted Mr. Partington's selection to contain ; and I think that no reader of this book will deny that they are here.

As to the life of the Time, it is illustrated here in every sort of direction. As we move farther and farther away down the opening years of the Nineteenth Century more and more evidence accumulates, evidence of a most contradictory kind. I have not the knowledge, nor is this the place, to air my history ; but if one knew nothing at all of the background behind these letters, had never heard of the Regent or Mrs. Fitzherbert ; knew nothing of Godwin, or Byron, or the Lake Poets ; believed that Napoleon was an island and Waterloo a railway-station—what a lively sense of actuality, even then, these letters would give you !

Isn't it lively to hear Buonaparte remark almost in our ear : " It is true the French are a fickle people ! " or to feel the enthusiasm of that precocious schoolboy who " did not wish to distress my worthy mother with the thought of being a spendthrift Old Mortality ! " or to encounter the marvellous description of the trip on the Margate steamer when the musicians came round to collect, and " an old Cockney with his hat tied under his chin, and a basket full of ham and brandy, turned towards them and said with an air of ineffable superiority : ' I never encourage such wagabonds.' "

However, I do not wish to commit the fault of nearly all writers of Introductory contributions, namely, to pick out all the plums beforehand from the pudding. But one last incident of the period, Lady Holland's Silver Vessel—*that* is a letter summing up, as it seems to me, all the eccentric character of that odd, so unfamiliar, and yet so close and friendly a landscape !

But, at the last, it is the personality of Sir Walter himself that seems to me to shine through all these pages. Whether he is enjoying a joke with Morritt or Kirkpatrick Sharpe, whether he

is helping Dorothy Wordsworth about Miss Seward, or showing a noble generosity towards Byron, whether he is fighting his misfortune with his admirable son at his side to help him, whether he is bearing Godwin with patience or Hogg with friendly affection—always he is a man the most human, the most noble-hearted, the most affectionate and loyal that our literature has shown to us.

Of all our men of letters in *personality* Johnson, Lamb, and Scott are closest to us: Johnson and Lamb were angels within their own circles, not quite so angelic outside them. As I think these letters prove, Scott was the friend of all the world.

I have the honour to be, dear Reader, your obliged and faithful servant,

HUGH WALPOLE.

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TAILPIECES BY W. P. ROBINS, R.E.

SIR WALTER SCOTT AND HIS LETTER-BOOKS

EVERYONE wanted to write to Scott, for was he not—as Wordsworth said—"the whole world's darling"? And nearly everyone did, from the Immortals down to the Immodest, from the King down to him who was perhaps the last Hermit. How Sir Walter did such ample justice to his correspondence is one of the wonders of his career of wonders. It was not only that he was lavish where he listed: first his Ballads, then his Novels, set quills dancing and scratching over the hills and dales of the British Isles, even to far America. The Pied Piper of Hamelin was nowhere in the magic art with the Author of *Waverley*.

It was on a fair August day in 1827 when Sir Walter, with his amanuensis Huntly Gordon, was working in the large cool library at Abbotsford—"one of the handsomest rooms in Scotland," he would fondly say as he surveyed the noble house and domains, the reward of his genius and labour. But the hand of ill-Fate was now heavily upon him. Two great firms had fallen like a stack of books in one of their warehouses. The crash, one of the many in that period of crazy speculation, had brought down Scott's secret printing and publishing business: it laid appalling mortgage on the palace of his dreams. Now he was slaving gallantly to write off the mountain of £130,000 of debt—spinning gold from his entrails, as we shall find his friend Tommy Moore saying. Huntly Gordon had previously suggested that Sir Walter should assemble his ever-growing correspondence; which, once answered, had been thrust into drawer after drawer. And on this summer's day, only darkened by adversity and the stupendous tasks which he had set himself, Scott put the work in hand. "They will be, one day, curious," he recorded in his Diary. "I propose to have them bound up, to save trouble. It is a sad task; how many dead, absent, estranged, and altered! . . It will be a good job done. . . It might have been long enough ere I get a confidential person like Gordon to arrange these Confidential papers."

After Sir Walter and Gordon had finished their "great job," the huge mass of nearly 6,000 letters and documents—in many ways the most remarkable Correspondence to one author in the

annals of Literature—was bound into twenty-three bulging quarto Letter-Books. They are original evidence from a remarkable age whose story is both generously and piquantly told in its letters. That the evidence is in script sometimes as fine, almost, as that of a mediæval manuscript, but oftener as elusive as a mountain path in a Highland mist, merely indicates something of my adventure with the Correspondence. The long row of bulky Letter-Books remained in the Scott family at Abbotsford until 1921, only John Gibson Lockhart, the novelist's son-in-law and author of the famous *Life*, and a few other privileged biographers having access to them for limited reference. Then, in 1921, the collection, the bulk of it unpublished, came into the sale-rooms, to be bought " by a fortunate and wise man of letters for £1,500," as Professor Saintsbury says, referring to their acquisition by Mr. Hugh Walpole to add to his notable collection of Scott books and MSS. It would have been most happily appropriate had Mr. Walpole, with his affection for Scott and his interest in the period, done this book. To him, however, is the greater happiness of saving the original Letter-Books for the nation : not less can be our satisfaction and gratitude.

It is necessary to make a brief reference to the editorial treatment of these Letter-Books. My plan has been to present some pictures of Scott's time, and to illustrate his remarkable life-story through the evidence of his Correspondence, my notices prefacing the various groups being intended to supplement the materials afforded by the letters. To follow the chronological order in which the MSS. are bound in the Letter-Books would have been greatly to simplify my task—and perhaps in some ways desirable. But it was not a satisfactory method in pursuance of that plan, and also—among other considerations—in view of the mass of correspondence rejected as being of little interest to the general reader. But the letters are chronologically arranged in the groups.

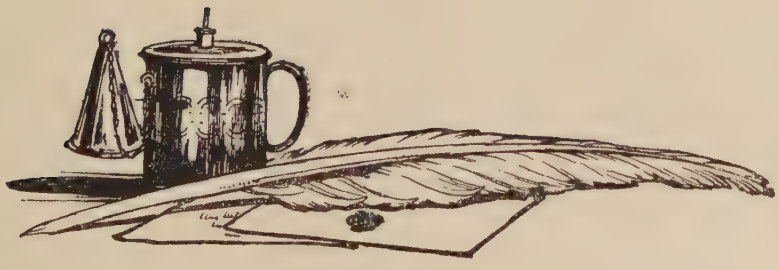
Owing to the vagaries of the many different holographs, it has been deemed inadvisable to attempt a literal reproduction of the selected letters. But except for some discretion (for the sake of clarity) in regard to correcting punctuation, expanding abbreviations, use of capitalisation, and the substitution of the ordinary s for the long ſ, etc., the aim has been to keep as faithfully as possible to the originals. Letters of the first importance, either for the celebrity of their writers or for their appeal as specimens of the art of correspondence, are given in full. Other letters have been treated according to their interest, and subjected to that excision which has the sanction of such a critic as Professor Saintsbury. In the

former class are a few examples from the comparatively insignificant amount of material already published. These have been included as essential to this representation of Scott's Letter-Books, and are indicated by an asterisk after the signatures. But even here transcription from the originals has revealed some striking omissions and contortions of text, such as are specially noted in the cases of the Byron and Southey letters, for example, on pages 188 and 77 respectively. Italicized words, except when they are titles of books and pictures, or are in other languages, represent underlinings in the original letters. Finally, where the original script is illegible or torn the presumptive words inserted are printed within square brackets.

My grateful acknowledgments are due to Major-General Maxwell Scott, the present head of Sir Walter's family; the Duke of Buccleuch, the Duke of Abercorn, the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, the Marquess of Bute, the Viscount Melville, the Baroness Kinloss, Sir Robert Peel, Lt.-Col. John Murray, Major H. E. Morritt, Gordon G. Wordsworth, Esq. (whose textual notes were particularly helpful), J. Horne Stevenson, Esq., K.C., C. E. S. Chambers, Esq., J. A. Ingpen, Esq., and Messrs. Constable & Co., for the courtesy of their facilities in this publication; and also to J. A. Lovat Fraser, Esq., M.P., Miss E. C. Batho (author of *The Ettrick Shepherd*), Dr. Alexander Mitchell, and John Kirkby, Esq., for their assistance. There are other acknowledgments I should wish to make, and hope to do so in a subsequent edition.

WILFRED PARTINGTON.

ADELPHI, 1930.



TOPICS AND PORTRAITS OF THE TIMES

From Patrick Murray of Simprim .	The Hero of the Wolverine.
William Stewart Rose . .	The Delicate Investigation.
The Princess of Wales and Miss Bond (2) . . .	Scott charms a Nation.
Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe (2)	The War of the Quarterlies.
James Moore and Sir Walter Scott (2) . . .	Corunna, and a Challenge to Scott.
Lord Jeffrey . . .	Judge Jeffrey Confesses.
Sir George Mackenzie . .	A Plea for an Old Song.
J. B. S. Morritt . . .	A Queer Bishop and his Queer Mansion.
The Marchioness of Abercorn	Ingenious and Genius.
Daniel Terry . . .	An Historic Sale and Mrs. Siddons's Farewell.
Matthew Weld Hartstonge .	Behind the Scenes with Napoleon.
Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe .	A very Superb Party and its Comedies.
J. B. S. Morritt . .	Hanging the Velasquez *Venus*.
Walter Scott, Junr. (2) .	The Prussian Boot.
Master H. D. Sparling .	A Schoolboy's Sonnet to his Love.
Lord Montagu . . .	Harriette Wilson's Price.
John Gibson Lockhart (2) .	Pistols for Two.
Sir Robert Peel . .	On the Catholic Emancipation.
Walter Scott, Junr. . .	High Life at "New" Brighton.
The Hon. Mrs. Cadogan and Walter Scott, Junr. (3) .	The Old Order Changeth.
Richard Hunter and B. R. Haydon (2) . . .	The Mediæval, and the New Margate Steamer.

THE HERO OF THE WOLVERINE

THIS opening selection from the Letter-Books comprises a group of letters of topical interest curious either for their contrasts with life and habit to-day, or for their light on celebrated people and events. The first brings the echo of an era of spasmodic gunfire which was to end in the roaring victory of Trafalgar. At the date of this letter, England had been for six years fighting the French and Spanish. Lord Howe had beaten a French squadron at Brest; Sir John Jervis had routed the Spanish Fleet off St. Vincent; Nelson was looming over the Nile in the glory of his first triumph—when occurred the exploit here described for Scott almost at first hand. The story is authenticated in our naval history—which, however, lacks the graphic details of this letter—because, although it treats of one of the many isolated duels of the period, Wolverine was an important warship, having been fitted with the newly invented inclined planes for running out the guns. She was a barque-rigged sloop of 12 guns and 70 men (full complement). The second and principal action now described was fought on the 4th of January, 1799. Mortlock, the hero, was presumably the half-brother of Patrick Murray of Simprim, one of Scott's old cronies:

From Patrick Murray of Simprim NEWCASTLE,
April 9th, 1799.

MY DEAR SIR,—If any thing can alleviate my sorrow for the loss of my Brother it ought to be the estimation his memory is held in by his countrymen, especially those whose good opinion is an object of desire. Believe me, that of all that has been written or said to me on the subject of poor Lewis Mortlock, scarce any thing has given me so much satisfaction as your letter. . .

He had the advantage of being bred when very young in the Merchant Service, allowed to be a much better school than a man-of-war, and under Captain Maclaurin—reckon'd the ablest seaman of his time. He was chosen by the celebrated Captain Shank [1]

[1] *i.e.*, Schanck, afterwards Admiral of the Blue, who devised many improvements in our Navy, including the inclined planes.

to command the Wolverine, as the man best qualified to exhibit the advantages of his invention; and during the seven months he commanded her, he shewed her superiority and his own seamanship at Ostend, Nieuport, Dunkirk, and Boulogne. Perhaps you don't understand what I mean by seamanship. Some of our best and bravest officers are not seamen. Sir John Borlase Warren is considered by the Navy as no seaman. Roddam Horne is supposed to be not only one of our best officers, but the ablest seaman in the British Navy. Lewis Mortlock was bred up under him likewise. . .

I have been assured that the action of the Wolverine at Ostend,[1] is the only instance in the history of a vessel of 300 tons laying four hours within 600 yards of a heavy battery. At Nieuport by stratagem he took nine vessels out of eleven. At Dunkirk he took soundings under the fire of batteries and several frigates. By this, I understand, he proved that the water there is not deep enough to allow men-of-war to get under the protection of the Forts. Afterwards, when there remained only one frigate of 24 guns he asked leave of Ld. Spencer to go in the Wolverine (of 12 guns) and attack her. Somebody said he would have stormed Brest to have been made Post [*i.e.*, full grade captain]. Yet he never in any one thing shewed the least rashness.

Within 600 yards of a battery

It is a misfortune to be behind the curtain and to see too much. In all the brilliant actions we read of, there are many things that to the world in general are unknown, and which it is perhaps wrong ever to mention. In the present case however I think it right. . .[2] The crew of the Wolverine consisted of 63 men. In place of being chosen, very few of them had ever been in action. The officers were Capt. Mortlock, Lieut. Macdougall, and three Midshipmen—one of whom was on shore; one a very young man, who had been at sea only six months; the third was a Mr. Furness, a remarkably fine young man and a great favourite of my Brother, who relied much upon his bravery, bodily strength, and activity—the Master an old man; and a Mr. Hartley, clerk to the ship. There were on deck: 1 Commander, 1 Master, 1 Clerk, 1 Midshipman, and 5 or 6 men; below at the guns: 1 Lieutenant, 1 Midshipman, and almost all the crew.

[1] On May 19th, 1798, when the French were preparing to invade England.

[2] The writer omits to say, what Scott doubtless knew, that the fight now to be described took place off Boulogne, when Mortlock in Wolverine engaged two large French luggers. When it came to close quarters for boarding, the enemy being on each side of the British ship, Mortlock himself lashed the bowsprit of one of the French vessels to Wolverine. In men the enemy were nearly three to one.

The moment the action began Furness, the Midshipman on deck, was shot, and died immediately. The Master was wounded in the small of the back, went below, and was of no more use. My Brother was soon after wounded by a spent ball in the breast that gave him great pain to the last, and in one finger. However, he, Hartley, and about five men steared the Wolverine, and defended the deck during the remaining and greatest part of the action. Hartley proved to be a most gallant, brave man. Enquiring why the guns below were not fired Lewis was told they could not get them to bear. He then desired some men to be sent up, but none ever came. Notwithstanding this, from the able manner in which the Wolverine was steared, the enemy were baffled in many of their attempts to board. Yet one Lugger being on the stern, and another on the bow, they succeeded in boarding six times, but were always driven back with immense loss. Almost the only guns fired were upon deck. One of them fired by Lewis went from stem to stern of one of the Luggers, whose deck was covered with men, and made a lane through them. He said the frightful screams they made and the horror expressed in their faces made his blood run cold. He was in the act of moving a gun with his own hands, when he observed one Frenchman getting on board, and another standing on the round house at the poop, giving three cheers to encourage his men. This man was Captain of one of the Luggers. Lewis first ran at the one getting on board, being the nearest, and with his two fists knocked him into the sea. He then seized a half pike, and run the Captain through. This man snapped a pistol at him, and cocked it again ; but although he had hitherto acted so valiantly, was—on seeing my brother get near him—seized with such a stupor as to allow himself to be run through without being able to pull the trigger.

Captain encounters Captain

Lewis was so good a marksman that when firing a cannon, he almost always hit, however distant the object, twice out of three times. And with a musquet, he was scarcely ever known to miss. Hartley told me that sometimes when his back was turned, he observed 20 or 30 musquets levelled at him and [at] a large Newfoundland dog that fought by his side, but that upon his turning round and aiming at them, they all stooped immediately, endeavouring to get under cover, so certain were they of his hitting one of them. Thus for two hours was he employed, fighting like a common sailor and managing the Vessel. And what is singular, she never lost steerage way although so much hemmed in.

In this manner the Fight continued till an explosion took place below, so violent as to throw down those upon the Quarter Deck, gave Lewis the bruise on his back, and set fire to the Stern. The Luggers now made off, firing one shot that struck Lewis between the left arm and side. But during the whole of this action, all the crew except the six or seven already mentioned, were below with Macdougall doing nothing. We were informed about a month ago for the first time, by two principally concerned on board, that Macdougall was running about in a fright and such confusion that he did not know what he was doing, crying "keep them out, keep them out, we must all be taken." Whenever he goes below now, the men say to each other "keep him out." In the account he gave he mentioned some leather bags filled with combustibles that had been thrown in at the cabbin windows.[1] The truth is that Macdougall, in his confusion, got a gun in the cabbin, and fired it through the Stern, without being run out. This was the explosion that threw those above on their backs, and set fire to the ship. When Lewis was brought down and Macdougall was sent up, Hartley advised him to give a broadside to the Luggers, still within reach. In place of which he desired Hartley to put up the helm and bear away. But Hartley left the helm and said he might do it himself, for he would not be accessory to their running away.

From this relation you see that had Macdougall not been a coward, and done his duty, the two Luggers must have been taken and my Brother's life saved. What must be the stings of this man's conscience? How much more happy am I although Lewis is killed, how much more happy Lewis must have been even during the greatest of his torture? We were told at the same time, that Macdougall deserted his quarters at Ostend, but it was kept secret.

Mere play

And in this last action Lewis did not know of his cowardice. On the contrary, he desired me to recommend him to Mr. Dundas.[2] The only thing we know is that he observed he was confused, and said: "Macdougall, don't be confused, this is mere play we are about now."

Lewis desired the Surgeon, when going to dress him, to go to a Marine, who was making most pitious moans, because he thought he must be more severely wounded than himself. This took up an hour, but the Surgeon was so frightened that he forgot to put on a tourniquet, and when he did begin to dress him, he pulled off

[1] This explanation is also given in James's *Naval History of Great Britain* (1837).
[2] Secretary for War. Afterwards Lord Melville.

the sleeve without cutting it. The manner in which he bore pain appeared to me inconceivable. For he made no complaints, although he never lost his senses, and two minutes before he died he proposed some alterations to be made on board on the Wolverine for the conveniency of the Officers. His spirits were never affected. So remarkable was that circumstance, that the only time I forgot his misfortune was when sitting by him. Whilst looking at and conversing with him, I felt no cause for sorrow, he himself appeared to be so perfectly satisfied, except when he spoke of my mother, and then he seemed to think his death would be a loss to her.[1]

I forgot to mention that Hartley said Lewis must have killed twenty French himself, for he saw him hit every time he fired. I was wrong in saying that few of the crew had ever been in action. They were on board at Ostend—one of the most dangerous pieces of service that ever occurred. Except this, however, very few of them had seen service before, and it could not add to their experience. . . Believe me to be your most affectionate Friend,

PATRICK MURRAY.

THE DELICATE INVESTIGATION

MARS and Venus were very much in conjunction at this date, judging by events which occupied the public tongue. One of these was the "Delicate Investigation" into the indiscretions of the Princess of Wales, who had foolishly talked about giving birth to a child which she intended to account for by saying she had adopted it. The commission ordered by George III rejected the charges, while censuring her levity. The scandal broke out afresh subsequently, when her divorce by George IV was only stayed by fear of revolution. This letter, by an official of the House of Lords, may stand for many agitated communications to Scott on the subject :

From William Stewart Rose E. W. B. ALBANY, [LONDON]
July 23rd, 1806.

MY DEAR SCOTT,—I wish I could give you any satisfactory account of the Princess of Wales's affairs. I feel entirely with you as to the cruelty of her situation, and having eat her salt, have, in some degree, the same motive as yourself, for being more peculiarly alive to her distress. From many circumstances which have reached mine ears, I am convinced that her persecution forms a part of a most extravagant scheme, which nothing but the madness of the

[1] According to the official account, Mortlock remained on deck although wounded in the hand, in the breast, and in the loins. When taken below mortally injured he ordered "Luff, luff, keep close to them," then fainted from loss of blood. The Wolverine, however, had to draw off, making for Portsmouth, where Mortlock was put ashore. He died shortly after.

supposed projector could render credible. When I tell you that the Prince of Wales sometime since openly affirm'd that he 'had the power to crush the Princess' when he pleased; that he formerly

Caroline's conduct

profess'd his entire indifference to her conduct, tho' he then believed and profess'd to believe that she was all that her accusers at present maintain her to be, and that the first paragraph of Lady Douglas's evidence now states her information to be given either at his suggestion or command, that Mrs. Fitzherbert's brother has abjured his religion, and that his sister has taken the preparatory step of dismissing her confessor —when all these things are put together you will, I think, agree with me in the conclusion to be deduced from them. In the mean time she has, as I before hinted, I fear afforded much matter for reproach, and what, if substantiated against a woman, educated in English habits, would amount to a moral conviction of guilt. As it is I should no more suffer my opinion of her character to be influenced by such traits than I should infer profligacy in a man from looseness of conversation. One very painful circumstance has been proved by Lady Douglas,[1] her having designed some drawings of very indelicate subjects; in which, however, I understand, the deponent herself assisted! . . Believe me ever, my dear Scott,—yours most truly,

W. Stewart Rose.

SCOTT CHARMS A NATION

The two following letters—the one on behalf of the Princess of Wales, the other from a humble village schoolmistress—show the author of *Marmion* and the *Minstrelsy* as already the darling of the nation. After dining at the royal retreat at Blackheath, Scott described the Princess as charming. J. G. Lockhart tells, with malicious relish, the story of Caroline leading the poet into a rather dark conservatory; and, seeing him hesitate, tauntingly saying: "Oh false and fainthearted troubadour. You will not trust yourself with me for fear of your neck." But although Scott hesitated in the conservatory, he supported her cause in the open:

From Mrs. Hayman (For the Princess of Wales)

MONTAGUE HOUSE, [BLACKHEATH]
22nd February, 1807.

My Dear Sir,—I lose not a moment in saying that the Book is safe in the Princess's apartment. Of course the Introduction to the 3d Canto was impatiently turned to, and I am commanded to say that nothing so gratifying to the Princess's feelings could have been done, and that her Royal Highness admires not only the beauty of the Poetry but the good taste and good judgment with

[1] Wife of Sir John Douglas, an intimate friend of the Princess Caroline.

which that very interesting part is written. The drawings I am also to praise as they deserve, and of some it is impossible to say too much—all are beautiful, and I am to return the Princess's thanks to you and to Mr. Skene for the very valuable present.[1]

I am not a little proud of being the second person in England who has peep'd into *Marmion*. The Princess went alone to the Duchess yesterday evening, and left it with me. I sat up very late, and skim'd all its contents with great delight. I do hope your friend Mr. Skene will draw from the Poem itself,[2] for you have more the happy art of writing pictures than any Author I know—even the Picture, which cannot be drawn, of your early life with your friend is most strongly and delightfully present to me, notwithstanding you grew up such a savage as to bury a poor Woman (pretty too !) alive in by far the most barbarous manner that ever was devised ! O, I see all that too ! and hope Harriet Williams Wynn's vision will be as perfect. Having view'd many of the scenes depicted by Mr. Skene I am particularly pleas'd with the beauty and accuracy of his Holyrood Palace—am I right ?

Pray drive the gout away with cold Water or Hot Water, take the appointment, and make haste to Town. *I must* go the end of the Month, till when, after the 9th, I shall be at least to be heard of at No. 28, Lower Grosvenor Street. Don't forget it.

A. HAYMAN.

[IN the following month the Princess sent a silver cup and cover as a present for Scott, and a smaller cup for Skene. A year later Mrs. Hayman wrote for the Princess :]

"I am commanded to thank you much for *Queen Orraca*, and to express the Princess's impatience not only for the beautiful copy of *Marmion* which delights her, but also for a sight of the Author who no less delights her, so pray come to London with *Marmion*."

From Miss E. Bond

FORTROSE,
January 1, 1808.

SIR,—An irresistable impulse leads me most cordially to wish you the compliments of the season, and that you may live many years

[1] This copy would be one of the several MSS. of *Marmion* circulated by the author among his friends. The poem was not published until 1808. The special interest in the Introduction lay in Scott's tribute there to the Princess's father, the Duke of Brunswick, who had been mortally wounded at Jena. The other poem, *Queen Orraca*, mentioned later as having been sent by Scott, was Southey's.

[2] James Skene, whose sketches of Scotland were always at the disposal of his friend Scott—although *Marmion* was eventually illustrated by Westall.

to *wield* your pen, for the amusement and instruction of Mankind. To a person immured from the charms of enlightened Society—a new publication has a thousand charms.

A cottage scene

About a month ago a Lady well pleased with the progress her daughters are making under my *tuition*, sent an offering of *Meal* and *gweed strong ale*, and to crown all the perusal of Scots' Minstrelsy.[1] Never having heard of the book, I asked the Girls what sort of a thing it was, "O famous you will read all about the *fairies*—and the *Bonny Mill-Dams of Binnorie*—and the fairies playing at the Baa, that Anne Forsyth used to sing at the School-room; and only think, there's in't about the Hill of Pherdie, whose *Fivepence* * was made better. Crossing my shawl over my breast, I poked the fire, and, drawing my chair close to its side, opened Volume 1st, when what was my surprise, to find the compiler was an old acquaintance, and the son of a man to whom, at a distressing and interesting period of my life, I had been obliged to for an Asylum under his hospitable roof for many weeks.

My interest, thus raised, was not diminished by perusing the most interesting work, that so descriptively brought before my eyes such a variety of scenery, and scenes that, in part, I am so well acquainted with. Trusting you will not deem the good wishes of a heart ever alive to gratitude an impertinent intrusion,—I am, Sir, your sincere well-wisher,

ELIZTH. BOND [2]

* The nickname of a fairy changeling that passes my window daily.

THE WAR OF THE QUARTERLIES

HERE is Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, artist and literary recluse, as whimsical as learned, of whom Scott wrote: "Strange that a man should be curious after scandal of centuries old. Not but Charles loves it fresh and fresh also, for being very much a fashionable man, he is always master of the reigning report." How curious, we shall see in these two letters (and others later) of an excellent letter-writer. In the first, the "impending tempest" refers to the opening of the War of the Quarterlies by the founding of the "Quarterly Review" to counteract the influence of the "Edinburgh Review," whose political views and malignant attacks had united Canning, Scott, Ellis, Southey, John Murray, and others against it. "The proud critick" is Lord (then Mr. Francis) Jeffrey, editor of the "Edinburgh," who had given offence

[1] *i.e.*, Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, published 1802 and 1803.

[2] Scott also befriended this schoolmistress, who, in another letter, wrote: "The north of Scotland is not a place to make money in. . . You men have every advantage. . . Now had I been of the masculine gender, I might [have] been Captain of a Man-of-War by this time, with a bonny wife and bonny bairns. Lord help me for such a fancy."

by his review of *Marmion*, in which typical criticism he asserted that the author had neglected Scottish feelings and Scottish characters! For which and other indefensible statements Scott said he owed him "a flap with a foxtail"—and duly gave it:

From Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe

HODDAM CASTLE,
9th January, 1808.

MY DEAR SCOTT,—The consideration of the impending tempest which points towards the too proud critick of Edinburgh is a vast refreshment to me, and I can never sufficiently thank you for offering me a share in the glories of the day. Tho' those who are to ride on the whirlwind and direct the storm are aweful spirits, yet as you esteem me worthy of their fellowship, I cannot greatly fear them. But were they to reject my labours after all, alas Sir, I shall lose both my reputation and my ten guineas, which last to the second son of a Scotch Laird is the greater loss of the two. I write not this "*voulant faire la precieuse*," and intend seriously to set about Mr. M's poem whenever my health will permit. But I tremble, in the meantime, like a philosopher of Candide's school, for the fate of my energies. I have not the pleasure of being known to Mr. Ellis,[1] tho' I am exceedingly intimate with his merits; nor to any of those distinguished persons whom you mention, saving one of the Hebers, and that but slightly. But had I a vote in electing the day boarders of this coterie, there is one person named by you whom I'd decidedly blackball: and that is Mr. Moor[e] —not on account of his fundamental trespasses against all the rules of modesty and discretion (which is his own affair), but because he did enfringe the canon law of literature in his challenge of Mr. Jeffrey. There never was such a thing heard of—and not to shoot him after all, the silly fellow![2] But Mr. Moor[e] had a mind to appear a complete Mars, a Captain Tucca, a Pistol in the eyes of those Venus's whose charms he chaunteth so sweetly in roundelays and fiddle-faddles—"he would foine and give the mortal touch"; and, I warrant you, charmed them to a woman with his valour. But I am like Mistress Quickley, I cannot abide swaggerers; swaggering is abominable in literary persons. Had I power in this case I should say—"shut the door, there come no ancient swaggerers here. . ."

Moore's duel with Jeffrey

CHAS. K. SHARPE.

[1] George Ellis, one of the Anti-Jacobin writers (see page 10).

[2] Thomas Moore called out Jeffrey in consequence of one of the latter's reviews. The police intervened on the duelling-ground, when it was found that both pistols of the desperadoes were unloaded.

From the same

HODDAM CASTLE,
5 March, 1809.

My Dear Scott,—Having another *opportunity* (I daresay you wish such conveniences at the devil) I am resolved to thank you for your last letter, which arrived this morning; and hath cast me into such a fit of the dumps that, tho' 'tis a fine sunshiny day, I have seated myself by the fire, and shut my eyes upon a nauseous bed of snowdrops and crocuses blooming directly before the windows of my chamber.

In the first place, I find something uncomfortable in the decease of poor Camp.[1] He was a wag-tail acquaintance only, but I entertained a great deal of respect for him; and, had we possessed opportunities, I am certain that we should have become very intimate. When a dog dies we are sure that he will never come alive again in other regions, and that always adds greatly to my affliction. Yet there are so many men (and women eke) so prodigiously inferior to dogs in intellect that sometimes one is tempted to think, either—but this is dangerous cogitation, and not to be recorded. However, it is perhaps as well that poor Camp has now departed, before the evils of the age fell sorely upon him. A superannuated favourite of the canine species (I speak from experience) is a sad burden, both to himself and his friends. He loses his eyesight, his hearing, the use of his limbs, and smells strong enough to cast Cloacina herself into convulsions. Then the more delicate members of a household cannot endure him in the dining-room, the poor beast, being better fed than taught, can neither peruse *Gulliver* nor *Pamela* to reconcile him to the stable or the kitchen. In such a case death is a great relief. We bury the poor dog with proper respect, and then sit down to draw the most unpleasing conclusions from a comparison between him and the two-legged dogs who call themselves our cronies.

Mutual laments for Camp

It vexeth me that my critique hath not been printed, because I have shrewd suspicion that it never will. I think Mr. G.,[2] instead of cancelling one page, will finally reject the whole; for I guess that he doth not greatly approve, tho' you are kind enough to smoothe things a little. It certainly is already so short that it would

[1] There was always a dog beside Scott while he worked in his library. Camp, one of the best, was "got by a black and tan English terrier out of a thoroughbred English bull-bitch." He appears in two of Raeburn's portraits of Scott.

[2] *i.e.*, William Gifford, first editor of the "Quarterly Review." He was once violently assaulted in a bookshop in mistake for another writer of the same name. These were fighting times for reviewers, before the law of libel got a stranglehold on them.

have had a strange appearance without its tail—I should have made a figure like that of Cuttie Sark among the Witches, tho' only remarkable for my lack of linen.[1] Then I do not like what you say concerning hurry and precipitation. Surely the first Number should have been correct as possible, if these rogues of the Cowgate were to be confounded.[2] Ah me, the first blow is every thing; and the enemy hath the great advantage of being on the wrong side of the question, besides much reputation with all the Eton boys, the gentlemen Commoners of Oxford, and Ladies who mark their progress in a book with a bit of fine pink ribbon. Concerning your part of "The Review," I feel the greatest confidence in spite of what you allege respecting the mantle. . . If you transmit it, pray fold down the page at your own portion. I promise secrecy, and the dog ear may perhaps save me from a few guesses.

. . . Lady Stafford is about to print (privately) a long Hist[ory] of the Sutherland family, from Sir Robert Gordon's MS. which, I'm told, is very amusing. But I'm sure it can by no means equal the Somerville Chronicle, which I would fain beseech you to persuade Lord S[omerville] to publish.[3] It is inimitable, but Lord S. must not be suffered to read much of it, else he'll never allow it to be put forth; there is so much about Crows and Puddings—moreover the Somerville Ladies greatly resembled Io, and gave the King a pudding oftener than they gave the crow.

Burns's strong language

The Article respecting Burns in the last "Edinburgh Review" is curious many ways. But one thing diverted me much—the Sages suppose that he offended the Lady, when he talks of pressing [her] to his bosom, by the strength of his language. Alas, she was none of those who are offended by strength in any way: weakness would have suited her less. She was, second to Lindsey, "ane Cow clink" of the most promiscuous and impudent gusto. I remember her well, when she contrived to keep a rag of reputation to cover her nakedness, and was received. She was a little thing, all daubed over with paint, and had a mouth from ear to ear.[4]

Adieu, I am ever your's

CHS. KIRKPATRICK SHARPE.

[1] "Cutty-Sark" = short-shirt, the nickname shouted by Burns's "Tam o' Shanter" at the one good-looking witch dancing in Alloway Old Kirk; which shout brought all the witches after him, with the result given in the poem.

[2] *i.e.*, the writers of the "Edinburgh Review."

[3] Edited by Scott under the title of *Memorie of the Somervilles*, and published six years later. It is as curious a history as Sharpe suggests.

[4] The Article which prompted this reminiscence by Sharpe appeared in the "E.R." No. XXVI (Jan. 1809). The Sages (*i.e.*, the critic) made the points that

CORUNNA, AND A CHALLENGE TO SCOTT

THE following letter from the brother of Sir John Moore, with Scott's reply to it, is an echo of Corunna, recalling those inspired lines (that Byron had to deny the authorship of, but wished he had written):

> Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
> As his corpse to the rampart we hurried;

But it is not only the echo of a much-debated military retreat of a great leader who made the way for Wellington: it recalls the old troubles with the Reviewers, whose pens were mightier than the swords—or anything else, apparently. Great ones and little ones had railed to Heaven—and Scott—against the "Edinburgh," which Sir Walter ultimately renounced. Now he is challenged, as a point of honour, to turn upon the "Quarterly" child he had helped to bring into the critical world. His reply makes an interesting study:

From James Moore CONDUIT STREET, LONDON,
September 24th, 1809.

SIR,—It is in consequence of the admiration which I entertain for your genius that I presume to write to you, being persuaded that you will be glad at the occasion, which I shall point out, of escaping from an unworthy association. It is given out, and commonly known, that you are one of the Authors of the "Quarterly Review"; in the last number of which my work was commented upon.[1] I shall only to you take notice of the first criticism that is there made.

When Sir John Moore was superseded, and ordered to act as Third-in-Command, after having been employed on two occasions as Commander-in-Chief, I observe that there are few British Generals who would not have resigned on this treatment. This remark is made on good military authority, and I shall give you

Burns's muse dealt in nothing but locked embraces and midnight meetings, and that he resented unchivalrously the way his patronesses shrank from the familiarity of his admiration. The critic was referring, as Sharpe perceived, to Burns's song "The Lass o' Ballochmyle," the penultimate verse of which is:

> O had she been a country maid,
> And I the happy country swain;
> Tho' sheltered in the lowest shed
> That ever rose on Scotland's plain,
> Thro' weary winter's wind and rain
> With joy, with rapture I would toil,
> And nightly to my bosom strain
> The bonnie lass o' Ballochmyle.

The lady was Wilhelmina Alexander, whose brother came into possession of Ballochmyle in 1785. Burns met her in 1786, and she was still alive at the time Sharpe was thus describing her to Scott. She died at Kilmarnock, at the age of 88, in 1843. When this and another song by Burns were similarly criticised during the poet's lifetime, he wrote: "Damn the pedant, frigid soul of criticism for ever and ever."

"Ane Cow clink" = a harlot.

[1] His *Life* of Sir John Moore.

one recent example. Sir James Craig fell sick in Sicily, and the temporary command devolved on Sir John Stuart, who was at that time a Major-General. The moment, however, that Lieut.-General Fox arrived in Sicily, Sir John Stuart resigned.

The Quarterly Reviewer, not content with censuring my observation, asserts that I am on this occasion at variance with my Brother, and to prove this he quotes a passage in one of his letters. The date of this letter is suppressed, and if you take the trouble to examine it, you will be surprized to find that this letter, instead of containing Sir John Moore's sentiments on being appointed Third-in-Command, is the expression of his feeling near three months afterwards, on being nominated Commander-in-Chief.[1] Thus the Reviewer begins with a mistatement, equal to forging a quotation, and continues the whole with similar perversions of the truth. It was most gratifying to me to perceive that our malignant enemies could not traduce my Brother, or censure me, but by such unworthy misrepresentations.

Charge of forging a quotation

I now come to the point. I cannot help considering it impossible for a person possessing your high literary reputation to continue connected with such associates, after reading this scurrilous libel. You will surely no longer lend your name, or exert your talents, to extend the sale of such a publication. Walter Scott, who has so admirably celebrated Scottish Chivalry, will never herd with political hirelings, who, for ignoble party purposes, attempt to soil the fair fame of a Scottish Knight, likely to be the theme for the songs of future Minstrels. I have the honor to be with the highest respect, Sir,—your most obedient and most humble Servant,

JAMES MOORE.

From Sir Walter Scott to James Moore

ASHESTIEL,
3d. October, 1809.

SIR,—I am just honoured with your letter, and have the disadvantage of not being qualified to enter into the subject to which it relates, having perused none of the publications concerning the late ill-fated affair in the North of Spain. This has not arisen from any indifference upon the topic, but rather to the very painful interest which I must feel in a discussion on which after all I am not very competent to form an opinion.

[1] After which promotion he was called on to conduct the famous retreat upon Corunna—when he was killed, and hurriedly buried, as described in the poem by the Rev. Charles Wolfe.

I am neither responsible for the article in the Qy. Review which you complain of, nor have I means of exercising any control over that publication with which I am not otherwise connected than as an occasional and rare contributor. My personal acquaintance with the Editor and one or two of the gentlemen concerned frees them from deserving the injurious epithet which your warmth has harshly bestowed upon them; and I might have enlarged upon its injustice did not the cause of your irritation claim sympathy and allowance. Had your description been in any degree applicable I should not have waited for the admonition of a gentleman to whom I have not the honour to be known to break off all connection with them, not merely as reviewers—a very slender bond of union—but as private friends. As I should feel this no slight sacrifice whether their talents or the length of our intimacy be considered, I am happy to say the present circumstances do not appear to me to demand it. With thanks for your expressions of personal consideration, I have the honor to be, Sir, your most obedient servant

Scott's denials

[signed] WALTER SCOTT.[1]

JUDGE JEFFREY CONFESSES

APPROPRIATELY after the foregoing pages comes a letter from the cause of much of the trouble—Francis Jeffrey, of the "Edinburgh Review," who had long been an intimate of Scott, the friendship continuing in spite of political and critical disagreements. Here Jeffrey is showing Scott an advance proof of what he had written on *The Lady of the Lake*, and repenting his earlier errors. There are not many letters from Jeffrey. This one is typical of them, and of the man:

From Lord Francis Jeffrey

SATURDAY EVENING,
11th August, [1810].

MY DEAR SCOTT,—I think it right to let you see these sheets before any one else sees them. I cannot regret having told the truth according to my oath of office; but I should very deeply regret having told it in such a way as to give you any pain. I am now sensible that there were needless asperities in my review of *Marmion*, and from the hurry in which I have been forced to write, I dare say there may be some here also. I have bungled your poetical

[1] From the original draft in Sir Walter's holograph, preserved in the Letter-Books. There is a letter from Lady Hood to Scott (July 22, 1811) in which she scolds him for his neglect to honour Sir John Moore in *Don Roderick*. James Moore states, in a subsequent letter, that Gifford (then Editor of the "Quarterly Review"), who had been a friend of his family, had sent him an apologetic intimation that the article complained of was transmitted from such high authority that he had no power to hinder its publication.

character too, by beginning my sketch on a scale too large for my canvas, and the mere unskilfulness of the execution I fear has given it something the air of caricature. But I think you have generosity enough to construe me rightly in stating all these things, and to believe me when I say that I am sincerely proud both of your genius and of your glory, and that I value your friendship more highly than most either of my literary or political opinions.

And now, presuming that this article will break no squares between us, I have two favours to ask; one, that you would if possible, dine here on Tuesday to meet Alison, Playfair, and two American ladies who are very much your admirers; and the other, that you would dine here again on Thursday with Jack Murray and two friends of Sydney Smith, who are just returned from the Highlands. I am afraid you will think me very unreasonable for one week, but if I do not catch you now, I am afraid I shall see little of you till November. Believe me, ever very faithfully yours,

F. JEFFREY.*

Half-past five both days.

Be so good as return the sheets when you have quite done with them.

A PLEA FOR AN OLD SONG

IT was the recollection of stirring days and merry evenings spent by Scott, as a young man, with the Edinburgh Light-horse (raised partly owing to fear of a French invasion) that prompted this Scottish Knight to ask for a special Corps song. The task, considering the subject suggested, was rather for a Burns. Whether Scott complied I do not know; but that he would not take the request amiss may be judged by one of his Diary entries, after a lively dinner-party at the Bannatyne Club. He opines that there was more affectation than improvement in the substitutes for the old broad songs; and says, with Shakespeare—

> Swear me Kate, like a lady as thou art,
> A good mouth-filling oath, and leave "in sooth,"
> And such protests of pepper-gingerbread.

From Sir George MacKenzie

DINGWALL,
[Ross and Cromarty, 1809].

DEAR SIR,—I have considerable doubt of my being entitled to ask a poetical favor of you; first because our acquaintance has been so long interrupted by my long residence in this country; and secondly, because you are so fortified by the Great Pyramids of your two Poems,[1] that it must appear bold in me to ask you to

[1] *i.e.*, *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* and *Marmion*.

leave your high Station for a moment. But as I well know that your goodness of heart will never permit you to forget a fellow soldier; and as I know your convivial qualities, I have some hopes that the favor I am about to ask will be granted.

As I am made to believe that I can sometimes amuse others with a song, and as my fellow Local Militiamen sometimes call upon me, I have to request that you will bestow a few leisure minutes in composing a few staves to enable me to welcome them to Quarters as you did Thomas Adair of old, at Musselburgh. I should wish the measure to be for the time of Robin Adair. As we are *Highlanders* (tho' not wearing Philabegs) that circumstance will furnish you with some ideas. As to your Military enthusiasm I know it well: it will do the rest.

Since I am on this sordid subject, I may mention the burden of a song I once heard, which admitted of some humour; but it was rather too broadly indelicate. The tune was [that of] Sally in our Alley. A lover on a cold winter night, arrived at the door of his Mistress, and asked impatiently for admittance. She told him not to be in a *hurry*. After expressing much impatience, and receiving the same reply, he was at last admitted; and it may be presumed past a very happy night. But he was as impatient to be gone in the morning as he was to get in the night before. She presses him to stay a little longer, and when she finds she cannot prevail, she consents to his going; but tells him that the next time he comes that way not to be in such a *hurry*—"don't be in such a hurry." I think this might be turned, without any *broad* hints, and yet the innuendo left sufficiently clear. I wish much you would try it.

Burden of the song

I have perhaps already asked too much; but I must take chance of forgiveness for asking a Corps song—that is, a Military effusion for the Ross-shire troops. You will confer, by granting my request, a favor which I can never return, so that the only reward you have to look for is the pleasure of doing a good natured thing. Whether your now important avocations permit you to grant the favor I have asked or not, I shall always be, with every sentiment of esteem,—dear Sir, most sincerely yours,

G. S. MacKenzie.

A QUEER BISHOP AND HIS QUEER MANSION

James Bacon Saurey Morritt has a lasting testimony to his close friendship with Sir Walter on the Dedicatory pages of *Rokeby* and of

Lockhart's *Life* of Scott. His story of the amazing Bishop is an original portrait from the eighteenth century. The Right Reverend Lord called Lady Hamilton his " Diana of Ephesus " ; but these little affairs of the episcopal intriguer (in both love and politics) happened before Emma sailed into the life of Nelson. This and other letters from Morritt gathered here are such as one would expect from the dilettante whose main achievements were his accomplishments as a traveller and classical scholar, and his founding of The Travellers' Club which is now in the second century of its journey.

From J. B. S. Morritt

[ROKEBY],
July 1st, 1811.

MY DEAR SCOTT,—We left London notwithstanding T. R. Highnesses' expected Gala on the 10th June ; and, being but bad modern courtiers, enjoyed, I must confess, rather more pleasure in a little tour we made on our way North than I believe any crowd, however elegant as the " Morning Post " would call it, that could ever occur. We passed a few days at a Suffolk parsonage with a very old friend of ours—I mean old in friendship not in years ; and as every country has its Lions for strangers, we found sport in looking at some old Saxon churches and deserted country houses which were not very important, but being eked out with county histories and family records became interesting enough to amuse us, who can be amused. We then came North by Bury St. Edmunds, where the fat spirits of departed abbots still hover round their old enclosure as appears by the flourishing state of the gardens and meadow within its ruined walls. Two great gateway towers still shew what was their taste and magnificence ; a Gothic tower highly enriched, and an earlier Saxon tower of very beautiful and massive proportion which is one of the finest specimens of that stile. . .

Lord Bristol and Lady Hamilton

I had the curiosity to go from thence to a modern unfinished and unfinishable building [1] intended for the mansion of the late Lord Bristol, Bishop of Derry, which was stopt in its progress by his death. I went because I knew his Lordship well in Italy, and was sure if the house was at all like its owner it would be unlike every other man's house since the destruction of the Tower of Babel, to which it really bears no small resemblance. When I knew his Lordship he was making love to Lady Hamilton and several others of the same stamp, who indulged him at sixty-four with many personal liberties of which they said, I believe justly, that he made a very innocent use. He encouraged the arts, and had made, by an eminent statuary, a colossal groupe of Hercules slaying the

[1] at Ickworth Park.

Hydra, but before the heads were finished he almost drove the Sculptor mad by selecting for a model of Hercules's countenance that of Mr. Pitt, and insisting on the Hydra being finish'd off into a triple likeness of Fox, North, and Burke, which last he again cut off to make way for Sheridan. He got drunk with his chaplain every day till the chaplain found the duty so severe he ran away from further promotion to a small living in Derry. As a British peer and Bishop he always talked bawdy to the women and blasphemy to the men, was more than once thrashed as a peer for his impertinence, and refused to fight because of his lawn sleeves. With all this he was so mad and so witty that you could not have helped taking to him.

Chaplain's severe duties

Now his house is as follows : a high brick rotunda above 100 feet high with a cupola, with brick Ionic columns below and Corinthian above, on the top of a high staring bank, without trees. The friezes finished with most beautiful stucco *basso relievos* comprising Flaxman's drawings of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. These were done by Italian artists, and in our climate will infallibly fall on the heads of some future travellers, at least of him that. . .[1] The walls and columns should have been stuccoed, but are not finished. The wings were to be immense buildings, one containing an assembly room, tho' there are but few dancers in the country, and the other galleries for statues and pictures which were not bought. These wings are not begun. It would cost at least £100,000 to finish the place ; and as the Bishoprick is gone and the Estate divided, there stands the Cupola, of which I hear he built an exact duplicate in Ireland. All the rooms in a rotunda, of course, have a circular side and a flat side, so that altogether the residence would be as unlike any thing that ever has been, is, or will be lived in as you can imagine ; and would not suit any man from its size with less than £50,000 per annum : whereas he left his son to finish it with an estate of about £10,000. [It] would make a very good Bedlam for crazy architects, and would be an admir[able]. . .[2]

I think the " Edinburgh Review " more and more stupid, the last Number at least is so to me ; their political mania begins by repetition to be tedious, the Regency question is only an old Parliamentary debate, and no article interested me except that on the Siberian and American bones of Mammoths &c., which is really curious. The wit has gradually disappeared, and the arguments

[1] The writer here quotes from the First Book of Samuel, xxv. 22.
[2] Original torn.

are somewhat threadbare.[1] I have not seen *Don Roderic* which Murray was to send me when published, so I suppose it is not yet out. Your benevolence had the credit it deserved in London, and produced the effect your best friends could wish.[2] Of course I need not say how much that effect gratified. Ellis never came to town. Heber came the day before we left it. W. Rose is better, but still on a couch. . . Your faithful and attached friend,

J. B. MORRITT.

INGENIOUS AND GENIUS

A CONSIDERABLE and intimate correspondence took place between Sir Walter Scott and Lady Abercorn, who has a chapter of this book to herself. Scott had this year bought for £4,000 (partly out of the advanced profits on *Rokeby*) the estate on which to build Abbotsford, thus realising his " highest object of ambition "—to be a Tweedside Laird. It was an ambition in a degree to be responsible for the financial disaster that followed, bound up as it was with his Ballantyne speculations. " O the beautiful cottage you sent me ! " replied Scott, to Lady Abercorn. But the plan had practical objections, although the new laird borrowed several hints from it for the Abbotsford which grew to be a castle rather than a cottage. Lady Holland, the clever but overbearing mistress of the Whig circle at Holland House (of whom a curious story is told later) ; clever Lady Morgan, whose novel *O'Donnel* once soothed and entertained Scott in his hour of trial ; and the poet Campbell—all figure in letters other than this one.

From the Marchioness of Abercorn 22nd Nov. 1811.

I have been prevented writing to you, my dearest friend, by such a variety of circumstances that it would be impossible to explain them by letter ; but I have not thought the less of you, and have felt very great anxiety to know whether your business is likely to come to a termination, as I do not hear often from Mr. Arbuthnot.[3] He having been out of London these six weeks, I am quite ignorant as to what has been done, or is doing about it ; and as few things interest me so much, I hope soon to hear from you on that subject.

I have had for a great length of time a sketch of a Cottage done by Mrs. C. Long for you. I sent the plan of your purchase to Mr. Arbuthnot, requesting he would get some one of taste to give an idea of a Cottage ; and he applied to her. I shall enclose it with this letter to Mr. Arbuthnot to Frank for you. It will be some

[1] The " Quarterly Review " was now consolidating its position, hence the interest of Scott and his friends in the rival.

[2] Scott gave the proceeds from his poem *Don Roderick* for the relief of the Portuguese sufferers in the Peninsular War.

[3] Charles Arbuthnot, one of the Secretaries to the Treasury, who assisted to secure for Scott his salary of £1,300 as Clerk of Session (see page 138 and *n*).

time arriving to you, but in that way will go free. I think it very pretty. She is a person of great taste, I believe, but I never saw her.

I am extremely glad you cut Lord Holland.[1] I am sure, however, when ever he does an unkind or an ungenerous thing it is by the influence of his wife. He was formerly a great friend of mine, and at that time he was one of the most amiable men I ever knew, but from all I hear he is much disimproved. I do not, however, know what mention he made of you in the House of Lords, so pray tell me.

I told Miss Owenson what you desired, and flattered her very much. She is now in Dublin, and will not return here till after Xmas, when she is to be married to Dr. Morgan who (you may have heard) the Duke of Richmond Knighted when he was here about three months ago. It was thought that it would be an advantage to him in his profession to have *dignity*; and little Owenson, whose *great talents* do not prevent her being as *vain* as possible, liked better to be Lady Morgan than Mrs. Morgan; and to gratify them both I asked the Duke to Knight him, which he did.

A Knighthood for dignity and vanity

I am glad you rejected the offer made you to translate L. Buonaparte's Epic. I hope Campbell will, because he will benefit by it, and I fear he is very much distressed. I forget whether I ever told you of a visit he made to us at the Priory before we left it. He liked none of the men he found there (so I heard), and few of the women. I believe he said he liked me the best, which I suppose was because I did not presume to talk to him at all, and the only notice I took was to be as civil as possible, keeping the distance that want of genious shou'd from so superior a one. I was told that he was extremely unpleasant after the Ladies left the room. Southeby[2] was with him at the Priory, and I confess they did not either of them give a specimen of that, that one might expect from a poetick mind. I believe you are the *only* poet who combines every [thing]. I thought I shou'd have liked Campbell, for there are some beautiful lines in *Gertrude of Wyoming*, but I think if I was to live with him for ever I never shou'd incline to him in the least degree. . . God bless you, my dearest Friend, yours with great truth,

A. Abercorn.

[1] The scene happened at a dinner; it was, says Jeffrey, the only example of rudeness he ever saw in Scott in their life-long familiarity. Lord H. had opposed a Bill by which Scott's brother Thomas and others were compensated for the loss of legal posts. *Vide* the *Life* of Scott.

[2] *i.e*, William Sotheby, a minor poet.

AN HISTORIC SALE: AND MRS. SIDDONS'S FAREWELL

With the following letter we enter the auction-room at the most famous library sale in the long story of book-collecting. We also attend the positively "last appearance" (at Covent Garden, as Lady Macbeth) of the great Sarah, who had made it several times during the previous thirteen years. The correspondent is Scott's friend Daniel Terry, the actor and playwright. Gordon Craig can throw no light on the often debated point whether Daniel is the great-grandfather of our Ellen Terry, being—as he tells me—little interested in *his* family tree, although Sophie Arnould's or Rachel's absorbs him. Anyhow, Daniel, who collected books for the Abbotsford Library, would be all excitement after the sale when, "in breathless silence," the Duke of Roxburgh's First Folio Shakespeare was sold for the "record" price of £100. But consider! To-day a First Folio sells, as a matter of course, at anything over £10,000.

From Daniel Terry

LONDON,
30th June, 1812.

Dear Sir,—I delay'd replying to your most kind letter until I had deliver'd both your enclosures. That directed to Mr. Heber I delivered on the morning of the arrival at the Roxburgh Sale, where I found him with Mr. Kemble close at the auctioneer's back most busily employ'd.[1] Miss Baillie's letter I never had an opportunity of taking to her 'til yesterday morning, so continually has my time been occupied morning and evening at the Theatre. Yesterday, however, was the beginning of a week of leisure, and I instantly sett off for Hampstead, where I met with a most pleasing and gracious reception and experienced all the gratification I had anticipated from an introduction to the Lady I had so long and so greatly desired to see.[2] I remain'd the best part of an hour at her Cottage, and received the favor of a very kind invitation to renew my visit and come and take my dinner with her. I do assure you, dear Sir, that I cannot express the gratification and pleasure I feel at the honor of this acquaintance and my sense of the kindness and friendship to which I am indebted for it.

From London to Hampstead

From the manner in which I have been occupied you will easily suppose that I have had but few opportunities to attend the

[1] Richard Heber, one of the most remarkable of English book-collectors, is here seen pursuing his life's work of buying books, which in all cost him £100,000, and required eight houses.

[2] This was a journey into the country for Terry. To-day, a tall Georgian house, enclosed by high walls, faces Romney's home in that quiet heart of Hampstead which fearfully defies the Underground and omnibuses down the hill. It looks, in the more general idea, very unlike a cottage to the sightseer, who will learn from the L.C.C.'s tablet that here lived Joanna Baillie (1762–1851), the Scottish dramatist and poetess.

Roxburgh Sale, by which, at least, I have escaped Temptation, tho' to say truth it did not wear a shape attainable enough for me to embrace it. I believe not an article but sold much above its value, and all the Booksellers complain of the impossibility of purchasing anything out of the hands of gentleman-collectors. John Kemble was buying, the other morning, the modern comedies of Reynolds, publish'd at 1/6 and 2/– at 7/– and 10/– each. At this rate and with this spirit has everything except the very *mere every-day rubbish* been bought. I have order'd a Catalogue with every article priced, and if possible the names of the purchasers. There was some talk of Nicols publishing it, but whether or not it takes place, you shall have one if you have not already been promised. Mine I destined for John Ballantyne, and of course it can easily be copied for you. Nothing is, as yet, arranged for my Winter employment. I have, however, neither fears nor impatience upon the subject. I am happy in being able to say, very honestly, that I have pleased and satisfied both the Town and the Managers (a very essential point), and although it is impossible to divert one's mind of anxiety, I need not be under any great alarm about the eventual circumstances of my professional endeavours.[1] I will take the liberty of informing [you] when anything takes place regarding my prospects for the future.

Keen book-collectors

I went on Monday to witness the farewell of Mrs. Siddons. I endeavor'd but in vain at ½ past 4 to get into the pit ; so with difficulty escap'd from the crowd, and was fortunate enough to get a seat in the upper boxes. The whole of the boxes, except the very highest, were in full dress as for the Opera ; and in the pit, which of course was *crammed*, not above 20 females were discernable. At the conclusion of the dreaming scene, it is not correct to say, so many *rounds* were given—it was continuous, and seem'd likely to continue without end. The green curtain was lower'd, and a Mr. Chapman came forward to learn the sense of the house. It was understood (I believe) that the address was wish'd for : he retir'd, and in about ten minutes (the applause continuing all the while) Mrs. Siddons was discovered in a plain but elegant domestic dress. The whole house stood up ; and the pit, to a man, threw up their hats, and huzzaed her 4 or 5 times. She spoke the address (such as it was) low and very agitated ; her brother led her off amid the warmest and most glorious testimonies of public favor ; and the

[1] He went into managership for himself at the Adelphi Theatre ; but failed, and died a broken-hearted man.

play was universally desired to end. Very few remain'd to see the farce in full: the departure of this great genius was such as might satisfy the fondest wishes of fondest admirers. There was some fear of a riot from some circumstances which had been noticed in the papers about the partiality of her distributing places and receiving exorbitant prices for her tickets, but the only notice taken of these things was by one or two puppy 3/6 apprentices who came in at ½ price, at the back of the slips, and met with nothing but contemptuous hootings and laughter—fine specimens of the reformists in *our* politics, as well the nation's. I beg pardon for intruding so long upon your time, and telling you perhaps what you have already heard every particular of. . . I remain, dear Sir, yours faithfully and gratefully,[1]

DANL. TERRY.

BEHIND THE SCENES WITH NAPOLEON

IT was men like young Mortlock, whose story is told in our first letter, who " settled the business of Boney "—as they used to say at the time. The Wolverines had played their part ; Trafalgar and Waterloo had been fought and won ; and now is the final scene in one of the world's greatest dramas—the bringing of Napoleon into captivity. Here are some reminiscences of that historic event, as told to Scott in a letter of one of his most indefatigable researchers, to whom the novelist has acknowledged his indebtedness in other fields. That he did not use this letter in his *Life of Napoleon* is the present editor's opportunity. That *Life*, however, was turned out pell-mell in the super-human effort to write off the author's debts ; and Scott's accumulated correspondence was also pell-mell, not being gathered into the Abbotsford Letter-Books. Ussher (not as spelt) was knighted in 1831 ; and became a rear-admiral.

From Matthew Weld Hartstonge MOLESWORTH STREET, DUBLIN. January 28th, 1816.

MY DEAR SIR,—. . . My friend Professor Brinkley dined the other day in company with Captain Usher of H.M.S. the Undaunted, and from him he learned a number of anecdotes respecting Buonaparte while escorting him upon his Voyage to Elba. Many of those he heard are already detailed in the last " Quarterly Review," which may have been possibly given by Mr. Croker. But as there are some which are not there given and which may possibly entertain or interest you, I shall here detail them, as well as I may and in the order they may present themselves to my recollection. Captain Usher found it extremely difficult to persuade Napoleon to depart from Frejus ; still one excuse or another was constantly presented as

[1] Endorsed by Scott :—" Account of Mrs. Siddons' last appearance." The great actress was subsequently " seen " again for charity ; and there was an attempt to recall her to the stage ; which Scott, on being appealed to, discountenanced, observing that " more last words are always dangerous."

a cause of non-embarkation. At length Captain U. found it necessary to insist upon his departure, and told him " that a French mob were more desperate and more to be dreaded than any other, and that if he persisted in remaining he could not answer for the consequences." " It is true (Bony replied) the French are fickle people." Upon that same evening, he added, he would depart at eight o'clock, which promise he accordingly kept.

" The French are fickle "

When B. came down into the Cabbin he observed a Bust of himself which Capt. U. had purchased in the town. He looked at it earnestly, and said : " That won't do Capt. Usher, it has got a frown ; now I appeal to you Captain, if you have seen me frown ? " He asked Captain Usher if he had not on Board more Boats (which was the case) than usually fell to the lot of a Ship of War ? and made likewise many pertinent remarks on the rigging, &c., of the vessel which displayed considerable nautical knowledge.

During the passage he was very lively and talkative. He exhibited a picture (a miniature) which Capt. U. remarked he presumed to be the Empress ? B. nodded assent. " Then her Majesty is very handsome," added the Captain. " Not handsome " (rejoined B.) " for the painter has a good deal flattered her. But she is exceedingly good." (The Empress *was* to have accompanied her husband, and Capt. U. had made arrangements accordingly.)

While approaching the Isle of Corsica, B. became most impatiently urgent to be permitted to land which the Captain of the Undaunted did not think proper to permit, although B. had had it in his option to have gone to Corsica, in preference of going to Elba. The Capt. said he had no Chart, [and] did not know the soundings. B. offered himself as Pilot ! and sent his aide-de-camp to the Cabbin for the Chart of Corsica, which he exhibited and pointed out the different soundings, &c. Capt. U. would not acquiesce to this, and pleaded in bar the strength of the wind which would preclude them from landing there. He (B) spoke in high terms of praise of Lord Castlereagh, who had, he said, fulfilled in the most honourable manner every promise and engagement he had made to him.

Upon the arrival of the Undaunted at Porto Ferrago, he held a consultation with Capt. U. as to what emblem or device he should select for his flag. " What do you think of three Bees, Captain ? " Usher bowed. " It is not for me to dictate to your Majesty." " Well, Capt., have you any tailors on Board ? " The reply was in the affirmative. They were then called up on Deck to receive instructions from the ex-Emperor, who told them that in two hours

he would require two flags, with three Bees or, on azure field. (How very like all this is to the manager of a Company of strolling players, preparing stay tape and buckram for the enactment of mock-Majesty !) Well, the flags are completed within the two hours, one is sent on shore, which is immediately displayed upon the Citadel of Porto Ferrago, and the other is hoisted in the Boat which conveys his ex-Majesty to shore. Here a grand procession is formed, and in great state. B. proceeds to the principal church, where Te Deum is celebrated for his happy arrival in his new dominions in Elba !

Napoleon's gourmand tastes

The next morning B. arose at four o'clock according to his usual custom, when he immediately partakes of coffee in very great quantities. At ten he breakfasts, which meal is *une déjeuné à la fourchette*, consisting of meat, wine, rich soups, and ragouts. At seven he dines : he is temperate in wine, the reverse as to eating, in which he is a perfect gourmand. Having risen, he rode round the island, in which excursion he was accompanied by Captain Usher ; B. wore a round hat, which was given him by the Capt. They were met by some Elbese peasants who loudly vociferated " Long live the brave English Nation," at which Buonaparte seemed most highly exasperated, as he was also at the reply he received from a peasant, of whom B. had asked some question, neither which nor the answer Capt. U. understood.

During the ride B. made the exclamation—as reported by the " Quarterly Review "—upon his reaching an eminence, of " *Ma* (not *mon* as reported) *petite isle !* " He next examined and tasted several springs, and chose one particular spring as containing the best water for supplying his new capital with that important necessity of life. He now displayed a great anxiety and uneasiness at the non-arrival of his Italian guards (1000 in number ; and, I believe, the victors of Lodi). They, however, soon joined the fortunes of their master ; and he assisted in their disembarkation, remaining upon the Beach from four in the morning until seven in the evening, notwithstanding that the day was most intensely sultry.

Before Captain Usher went on Board his ship to depart from the shores of Elba, B. presented him with a very handsome gold snuff-box, set around with Brilliants [each] of the size of a pea, and within the setting is placed a miniature of the ci-devant Emperor and King. The anecdotes I have here detailed are unquestionably true ; and are, I think, curious. The other anecdotes detailed by Usher

are given in the "Quarterly Review," and therefore they are not here recapitulated.

I met with a gentleman of the name of McCarthy, and, I believe, brother to Compte de McCarthy, during my journey to Cork, from whom I learned a few anecdotes of Buonoparte, which you may not be indisposed to add to the others given. He was born in France, and was obliged (from the conscription) to serve in the armies: he insists most strenuously that Buonoparte is not a courageous man, but that he has acquired a steadiness in the field of Battle, which the French aptly term Courage de Routine. The laurels won at the Battle of Marengo, he observed, should have adorned the brows of Augereau, and not those of the ex-Emperor.

The Emperor's intrigues

The late Empress Josephine was much loved and respected, but B. was very unfaithful to her, intriguing with every woman at the French Court; and, horrible to say, with his brother Jerome's wife, by whom he has had several children. He further told me, what is very extraordinary, that Buonoparte is extremely subject to most violent fits of epilepsy, which regularly occur during the indulgence of his intrigues, and at a time of all others, too, that he would be least desirous for such a visitation.

The Heathen poets represent Jupiter as visiting Semele arrayed in the dreadful attributes of omnipotence, in whose embrace she expired; and it would seem too that our modern Jupitertonian could not divest himself of the terrors of a tyrant, not even in the Amarinthine Bowers of Paphos. . . Yours,

MATTHEW WELD HARTSTONGE.

A VERY SUPERB PARTY AND ITS COMEDIES

KIRKPATRICK SHARPE'S lucky correspondents must have broken the seals of his letters with unusual eagerness. Robert Chambers, for one, bore such testimony, when he headed a reply to Sharpe with these lines:

> Blest as great Scott himself is he,
> The author that gets notes from thee,
> Written in thy witty style
> Paying nothing all the while.

Here is the whimsical scholar's reminiscences of a very superb party, which reads like a page from Fielding; and ought to be illustrated by a Rowlandson:

From Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe

93, PRINCES STREET,
[EDINBURGH]. 7th April, 1819.

MY DEAR SCOTT,—Your letter gave me great joy, though written under a wrong impression, for I was very happy to find that you

were well enough to wield pen again, and have been uneasy from the accounts of the pain which you have endured. I trust that you soon will get rid of these gall-stones (which, on the whole, I like better than the first supposed complaint), and be as well as your friends could wish. I have had accounts of your health from various quarters, and still shall be on the watch for intelligence, grudging your loss of time as well as your uneasy sensations. But I feel a presentiment that you will soon recover your health, tho' I have neither peep'd through a hole in an old Highland plaid, or through the shoulder-bone of a stolen sheep. I am not apt, in general, to see the sunny side of things; but in this case I do—be the omen lucky! . .

I intend shortly—the silly frisks of the season being well-nigh over—to set to work with Fountainhall, for which I am to have 50 pounds from Constable—I trust better paid than what Ballantyne promised, for from that varlet I cannot get 35 pounds which he still owes me. I shall put no scrawls in the way of etching, except, I think a little sketch of your armorial bearings at top of the dedication. The worst of this business is, that some of the most savoury passages of the MS. must perforce be omitted, owing to their extreme indelicacy—that, for instance, respecting the three Whigs who acted *The Essex Quaker* at Melrose. I am loath the party should lose the credit of that action, certes.

I have been much concerned with Will Davenant, whom you were so good as to give me. Some of his poetry is very smooth and charming; with now and then an old-fashioned wild flight, very seldom to be met with now. I perceive that Pope stole a good deal from him as he did from Shakespeare, who, if I remember right, was reported to have been his papa. Sir William's play of *The Wits* is surely capital, and there are excellent scenes in some of his other pieces. I wonder if there will be any portrait extant of this worthy before he lost his nose.[1]

Davenant's papa and poetry

Venus brings Mars into one's head naturally enough; and makes me think of a very superb Party aboard the Vengeur at which I was present last week. We all hurried down to Newhaven at half-past five oclock (I dined all the way, in my Hackney Coach), and took boat at six. The ship was certainly very well done up; and when the curtains that divided the deck were withdrawn, and

[1] It was not quite so bad as that. Sir William Davenant, who succeeded Jonson as Poet Laureate, had a broken nose, of which the wits of his time made much capital. He was baptized as the son of the landlord of the Crown Inn where Shakespeare used to stay; and he encouraged the idea that the Bard was his father.

the supper tables displayed, I never saw a prettier spectacle except at Vauxhall during the fête there. The whole had the air of a magnificent tent upon the water, and made one think of Cleopatra &c. &c. &c. In truth, I saw no Cleopatras, as far as beauty went: for other attributes, I shall not say—God mend all! Neither did I see the Play, the crowd was so great in the place where *The Cure for the Heartache* and *Raising the Wind* were enacted. After enduring suffocation, strangulation, and many other ations for the space of half an hour, I made a perilous escape through a rent in the sail which formed a side of the Theatre, almost losing my wig and shoes in the adventure. The ball went off much better; and at six in the morning boats began to move us homewards, when Sir James Home, trying to show his activity to Miss Mary Hope and some other ladies by springing off the ladder into the boat, fell backwards into the sea, his heels sticking on the side of our Gondola. He was tugged up; and you may guess the laughter. Bating this, and that two or three ladies were sick, and almost confided their secret sorrow to the bosoms of their flirts, I believe no accident happened. But enough of stuff. Pray have the goodness to present my best respects and wishes to all your family, and believe me, dear Scott,—yours ever most faithfully,

A gallant slips

CHAS. KIRKPATRICK SHARPE.*

P.S.—I forgot to mention that Dr. Hope hath been furious about this ship Party. He was not invited, so he predicted tempests, influenza, fevers of all colours, and ruin to the morals of the ladies. The weather was charming, and now he can do nothing but look as grim as the felon sow of Rokeby. He is strangely quizzed by everybody.

HANGING THE VELASQUEZ *VENUS*

THIS was the time when British collectors and institutions were acquiring masterpieces of literature and art from poorer foreign nations, much as America is doing in the twentieth century from a war-bankrupt Europe. Scott's crony Morritt secured the famous *Venus*, by Velasquez, from Italy; and here is the amusing description of the connoisseur hanging his great capture. His descendant, Major H. E. Morritt—whose home is the same Rokeby that provided the title and much of the scenery for Scott's poem—informs me that £300 was given for the picture, which was bought on the advice of Sir Thomas Lawrence. It was acquired for the nation in 1905, and is in the National Gallery—now being better known as "the Rokeby *Venus*."

From J. B. S. Morritt

ROKEBY,
Sept. 12th, [1820].

MY DEAR FRIEND,—The party who left your hospitable mansion with me, after making a week's stay at Mr. Charlton's and two days more at Sir John Swinburne's, returned here in good preservation, and are obliged to find in talking over the varieties of the Tweed Ettrick and Tine [*sic*] some relief to the uniformity of our Rokeby life till my girls return, and somebody comes to enliven us. Those two events are on the point of taking place, for I expect my nieces tomorrow, from Scarborough,—and William Rose, with his companion Sir Humphrey,[1] though I hear nothing from them, are probably at no great distance, as Rose's letters have been sent here and are awaiting his arrival. How they will reproach me for holding out false hopes of sporting I know not; but we are only now in the middle of our harvest, and the standing corn interferes with much of our sport, besides which the coveys are small, and with plenty of old birds—I have not so many young ones as I had a right to expect.

Pray desire the anonymous author of *The Abbot* to send me his cargo to Rokeby, as *The Monastery* was left at my house in London, and if *The Abbot* is sent to the same place he will fall into the hands of a dainty widow to whom I let my house till next January and who will not know much what to make of him.[2] Her name is Mrs. Read, supposed to be derived "a non readendo."

The Abbot I hear is extremely popular, and two or three of my correspondents are in raptures with it. I long for the book, because till I get it I dare not talk about it, as I should betray more knowledge than I chuse to account for. I would buy it directly, but having by that means found myself in possession of not a few duplicates of the author's other works, I think this time I will wait till I get my copy; as I am often twitted with questions of how I come by my duplicates.

Scott and Queens

I thought Queen Mary would take, and I rejoice in my sagacity. You understand Queens well, for you see how completely your prophecy is fulfilled, since the H. of Lords adopted the plan of procrastination. In a few weeks I begin to think nobody but Alderman Wood and the Radical mob will care a farthing about their idol, and we shall talk of some more agreeable novelty. What

[1] Sir Humphry Davy, the inventor of the miners' safety lamp.

[2] Both novels had been published this year. Morritt was one of the few persons in whom Scott confided the secret of the authorship of *Waverley* (see page 107 *et seq.*).

a mass of evidence we have had for the edification of young ladies and gentlemen.[1] I think Lord Holland said the best thing I have heard on the subject. When Monsr. Majocchi and some others of the Italian witnesses swore that in their conversation with each other no mention had been made of the Queen, he expressed a wish to be admitted into their Society, which he was sure must be much pleasanter than any that he had frequented for some time.

Lord Holland's bon mot

I have no news to tell you, Rokeby is as much as it was, and I tax my ingenuity much to find any thing to do at it. I have been all morning pulling about my pictures and hanging them in new positions to make room for [my] fine picture of Venus's backside by Velasquez, [which] I have at length exalted over my chimney-piece in the library. It is an admirable light for the painting, and shows it in perfection, whilst by raising the said backside to a considerable height the ladies may avert their downcast eyes without difficulty, and connoisseurs steal a glance without drawing in the said posteriors as a part of the company.

Stockdale and my nephew desire to be remembered by you and by all their kind friends at Abbotsford ; you delighted them beyond measure by admitting them of your party, and I feel very grateful for the opportunity of affording them so much pleasure. I have heard from our friend Lady Louisa [Stuart], who is well and in good spirits, and from Lady Seaforth. . . Ever, dear Scott most cordially your,

J. B. Morritt.

THE PRUSSIAN BOOT

These two letters, with their naïve pictures of the Duke and Duchess of Cumberland and life in Berlin when Prussia was tramping towards the domination of Germany, are from the novelist's son, 21-year-old Walter Scott, Cornet in the 18th Hussars, studying German military science. He was " a smart young fellow, with good manners, and a fine figure—standing well with the Horse Guards, and much master of his profession, retaining at the same time much of the simple honesty of his original character." If this was his father's description, these and other letters to follow only reveal its bare truth. After he left home, in his 'teens, Sir Walter wrote to him as man to man ; and early urged him " write to me whatever comes into your head. It is the privilege of great boys when distant that they cannot tire papas." Here, for a beginning, are two letters that pleased the great papa :

[1] *i.e.*, in the course of the trial of Queen Caroline, charged with carrying on " a licentious, disgraceful, and adulterous intercourse with . . . Bartolomo Pergami." The Bill of Divorcement presently before the Lords was abandoned the following month. Teodoro Majocchi was the chief witness against the Queen.

From Walter Scott, Junior

NO. 12, BEHRENSTRASSE, BERLIN,
Feb. 22nd, [1822].

DEAR PAPA,—I wrote a long letter to Lockhart the other day and gave it to my servant to put in the post, but either he did not understand me or the letter was too late, for when I returned from the party I was at I found my epistle lying on the table. I shall send it to him nevertheless, as it contains an account of my proceedings in Hamburgh and of my journey here. Sir G. Rose is extremely kind to me; and his family, as pleasant a one as can be.[1] I dine there almost every day, and spend the evenings as is the custom here in making visits, so that I have already been introduced to many of the principal people in town. To begin, I left my card on the Duke of Cumberland; and on the 19th, as I was writing to Lockhart, I got an invitation to dine with him that day at three o'clock, which is the fashionable hour here, so I had to look out for all my traps and found out, at two o'clock, a rusty sword and tarnished lace. However, I got them in tolerable sort of trim, and got there in time. There was only the aides-de-camp, Sir George Rose, his son, and myself. The Duchess is a great German-looking frau as ever I saw, but very good-natured and looks as if she had no objections to her bottle; and the Duke squints with one eye most ferociously—otherwise a good looking man, and not half so fat or large as either of his brothers. He examined the 18th uniform very minutely, found out a great many faults and that it was not the exact Hungarian dress, and ended by an offer of permission to his private tailor to make me a suit of the 15th; and Rose advised me to accept.[2] The Hanoverian whim was not easily got over, and he damned the Duke of York for presuming to know anything at all of the Germans. He has said nothing about it to me as yet. At dinner I was sitting next him, and he talked incessantly—told long stories and good things, said and done by him, at which the aides-de-camp laughed and the rest of the company endeavoured to do so. He talked of you, mentioned the date and day that he saw you and Mamma in London, of the Novels attributed to you, your own works, drank the health of the Author of the Novels, and begged me to write to Scotland and obtain for him a complete set of both the Novels and Poems. Whether his R. H. intends to pay for them or not he did not say, but only

The Duke of Cumberland

[1] Sir George Rose, an old friend of Scott, was our Ambassador at Berlin.
[2] Cornet Scott afterwards exchanged into the 15th, or King's Hussars, of which he became Colonel.

that he wanted them as soon as possible. If you think that they ought to be sent the best direction will be to me Post Restante à Berlin. Constable will know some agent in Hamburgh, or if you write to say they are sent there I shall get them here easily enough.

On the 15th of next month I shall get good lodgings on the Linden for three louis and a half per month. At present I am in a miserable hole of a place. The town is so full that it is impossible to get rooms at a hotel even, and one ought to have a decent room to receive visitors like the following: S. A. R. Monseigneur le Prince Auguste de Prusse; Prince Guillaume Radziwill; le Comte Neale; Prince Wittgenstein and others who have left their cards on me. Tomorrow I go to the Prince Auguste of Prussia's ball and supper; on Saturday next to a Bal Masque at Duke Charles's. Last night I was at Wittgenstein's who has a sort of court here.

Life in old Berlin

The hours here are very early [They] go to a ball at ½ seven and finish about one: to the theatre or opera ½ nine, and all is all over. So there is no great dissipation. The King is a good-natured, stupid-looking man as can be. The first Court that is held I shall be presented. There is nothing but military in this town, the very shop-keepers are whiskered and mustachiod to the eyes. The town itself, as far as I have seen of it, is very handsome; but the houses, that have the appearances of palaces outside, want carpets and furniture—everything is for outside show. I shall write to you a fuller account of it when I have seen a little more.

I have got a capital French Master, Mr. Dufresne was a joke to him. He also teaches German, but has not time to give me more than one hour. Sir G. R. is to send me a good grinder. I pay a servant, whom I got with a very good character and who speaks Italian, Spanish, French and German, 12 dollars a month, and he finds himself in everything. I shall have two hours a day of the German one of the French. As soon as the weather is settled I shall begin my surveying studies; young Rose is very perfect at that work, and will go over them again with me. No smoking allowed in the streets here; but a quarter of a mile out of town—and everyone has his pipe or segar. The money here is most particularly difficult to learn: there is at [least] twenty different kinds, and the gold varies every day more or less. Young Rose wishes particularly to get into the Celtic Society, and I told him that you could probably manage that for him. I heard from a Count Neale, an old goose who is here, that you was well, he having heard so from his daughter who was introduced to you not long ago.

Give my love to Mamma, Anne, and everyone. Postage is abominably dear, and I must pay all my own letters out of this kingdom. If you do not write by Rose direct to me Post Restante à Berlin, till I can settle.—Your affectionate son,

W. S.

[THERE is an intervening letter in which Cornet Scott tells his father that the Duke of Cumberland "asks about the books whenever I see him." Sir Walter, in one of his replies, warned the young soldier against falling into the company of some of the *Têtes échauffées*, who are now so common in Germany—men that would pull down the whole political system in order to rebuild it on a better model: a proposal about as wild as that of a man who should propose to change the bridle of a furious horse, and commence his labours by slipping the headstall in the midst of the heath." He concluded by bidding his son to pay some little attention to the style of his letters, "which, without being stiff or pedantic, should always be accurate."]

From the same

54, UNTER DEN LINDEN, BERLIN,
Prussia. April 5th, 1822.

DEAR PAPA,—I have been round the stables of one of the Cuirassier regiments: it is impossible to have men worse mounted than they are—the horses are many degrees worse in appearance than the cart horses of any of our light regiments, without having their appearance of blood. It is wonderful how they go through the quantity of work they get. Their feeding costs Government very little: each horse 5 lbs. of oats per day, a proportion of chopped straw, and a small quantity of indifferent-looking hay. The men look very well in the cuirass, particularly those who wear the steel or brass ones; the black are not half so handsome. At this moment a regiment of them and another of Lancers are passing under the windows on their way to the drilling ground. The people here are very anxious for a constitution, and the King and his ministers are getting one up for them. The deputies are to meet at Potzdam, which is only a pleasant drive to Spandau[1] for any refractory member.

Getting up a Constitution

There is for sale at present a quantity of the very best port, not that sort which is sent to England—black and strong; but wine of the very first quality. It has been lying on hand here for a year or two, port being a wine that is scarcely ever tasted. The first sort is red port of the vintage of '15. A hogshead containing from 260 to 270 bottles is 230 Prussian dollars; a dollar is three shillings. A hogshead of white port wine, which is the best sort I ever tasted (and which I never saw in England), containing 265

[1] The fortress.

bottles, costs about 370 Prussian dollars. The hocks here are very dear champagne—six shillings a bottle; claret—three and four, of the common sort. If Captain Lockhart is in town you can tell him of it, for after paying duty and carriage you have wine of the very first quality much cheaper than any you can get from a merchant in London. If you like I think I could get you a dozen of each to try. The hocks are a cut above me: Johannesberg Ansbruch is fifteen and sixteen shillings if of the vintage 1811. I thought it as well to enquire about some of these things in case you or Lockhart should want them. They are almost nothing here in comparison with England.

The Duke of C[umberland] is going on as usual. He told me [the] other day that he expected to see me attend the manœuvres regularly. If I do, his R. H. must give me a horse now and then; for, tho' I intend to have a hack during that time, 40 miles twice or thrice a week will be too much for him. I have not as yet got an answer to my letter of the 22nd of February, and the Duke asks about the books whenever I see him.

The French gets more easy every day almost: I wish I could say the same of the German. I have three masters—two German, that is to say one every day and another thrice times a week, and a French master. The riding I have been at twice, but do not much like it: in fact they undo all I have learnt already. When you write tell me the name of your collection of German Folklore. They have a collection of all the German traditions here, particularly those relative to Bohemia, which is less known than any other part of Germany. I have written this letter on a sheet of the best Prussian paper, which will show how far they are from perfection in that art.—Your affectionate son,[1]

W. S.

A SCHOOLBOY'S SONNET TO HIS LOVE

Among the letters containing high politics and low intrigues, stories and scandals, which the mail coaches brought to Abbotsford, few have the refreshing quaintness of those from schoolboys. Naturally, many boys wrote to Scott; and as naturally the great author's heart warmed to them. Who, indeed, could fail to respond to this high-spirited, precocious Grammar-school boy, whose appeal is characteristic of a type

[1] In his next letter the Young Cornet says the Duke of Cumberland had continued to insist that the uniform of the 15th was the only real Hussar pattern in the English Army. There is a description of Prussian cavalry tactics; and then this conclusion: "O! if Mama could see the bronze and gold necklaces and combs here: they are beautiful—but a cut above me. A comb costs four or five louis."

of letter which surely deserves a place in Professor Saintbury's classification of letter-writers :

From Master Hart Davis Sparling ANGEL LANE,
COLCHESTER. Nov. 26th, 1824.

RIGHT NOBLE BARONET,—If you please, sir, I should like to lay open my case before you, if you will not be angry at my presumption. First, I am a schoolboy, which doubtless you may perceive from my hand, which I know is a complete scrawl. I am very fond of reading your performances, both novels and poetry. Many a time have I sat reading them till I had to run fast lest I should be too late for school ; for I go to the Grammar School. We have been insulted by the bellman, too ; he was crying a dog that had been lost, but he didn't name any reward. We were standing by, and one of us asked him what was the reward. Upon which he replied, " that if he found it, his reward would be a rap on the sconce and a kick of the r×mp. Dear Sir Gualuir, I beg pardon, but I must say truth. My Mother Mrs. S., good woman, (and I really believe she was a good woman ay and Lady too, for who dares deny that the Sp×rl×ings are not honourable, though it is gone hard with them) is very fond of your works and allows me to read them. And I can assure you, they have wiled away many a weary hour. I have often longed to know him who has so often amused me.

The Bellman

Oh ! How I should like to live in the days of chivalry, to see myself surrounded by my vassals, to see the ruddy cup go round, to see the smiling and cheerful countenances of my faithful retainers. Happy feudal days. But no more of this ! My mother does not live at Colchester, but at a place called Hill House, Kirby-le-Soken. Perhaps you may know my godfather Hart Davis, Esq., (after whom I am named) Son of Richd. Hart Davis, Esq., M.P. London, but my hopes from this godfather are in some measure counteracted by a rascally wine-dealer (beg pardon : I said [this] in a little anger at something which then crossed my mind) who happened to be Mayor when I was born.

Sir Walter, I should be proud of receiving a letter from you, but I am a schoolboy, my pocket is " inanis "—and I do not wish to distress my worthy mother with the thought of my being a spendthrift Old Mortality ! Oh, Sir Walter ! how could you suffer the prick-eared covenanter to carry off the lady, and leave the gallant and accomplished cavalier to be disappointed. God bless the King ! and may heaven send him many a happy day, and may the Radicals and his enemies all go [to] the Old Gentleman with the cloven hoof.

I am 12 years of age, but from reading too many novels (not of yours, for of them I can't read to many) I fancied I must be in love too. I chose my lady, and as I write poesy sometimes (if poesy it may be called) I sent her the following lines :

No cares oppress thy breast, love,
Nor dost thou think on me ;
Untroubled is thy rest, love,
Thy hours pass merrily.

Transfixed by Cupid's dart, love,
Am I whom you disdain ;
Where e'er I roam this heart, love,
Will hover in thy train.

Sir W. would you send me a letter ? I am most ashamed to—to—a—as—ask yo—you t—to pa—pay for it, for when I get money I always make it go—scrambles at school, treats for my comrades, &c. &c. &c. &c. are calls upon my purse.

My address is Master Hart Davis Sparling, Mr. Willement's, Angel Lane, Colchester, Essex.—And now, sir, I remain, yours ever,

H. D. SPARLING.

[1st P.S.] Don't reveal my name. I rely on your honour, as I would on the King's (Heaven bless him).

[2nd P.S.] A viper fostered in the bosom of the family undid us, he was a v××××n, and an ungrateful one.[1]

HARRIETTE WILSON'S PRICE

INTO any picture of the time must romp Harriette Wilson, the celebrated courtesan, whom Scott—after dining with her at "Monk" Lewis's—described as far from beautiful, but a smart, saucy girl, with good eyes and dark hair, and the manners of a wild schoolboy. Here is some current report of her *Memoirs*, written to spite the Duke of Beaufort :

From Lord Montagu

LONDON,
February 11, 1825.

MY DEAR SIR,—. . All London are reading the *Memoirs* of Miss Harriet Wilson, a celebrated Lady in a certain line. Three volumes are come out, and she threatens eighteen, but with a kind hint that she will omit any name for 100 Gns., and from the freedom with which she treats those who already grace her pages she probably will make up as large a sum by her omissions as by the work itself. One Cabinet Minister having been mentioned set the rest, I suppose, to read it, for I hear Mr. Canning says it is the cleverest book (of the kind, I presume) he has seen for some time. But on the other hand, Ld. Melville told me yesterday he thought it dull.

[1] Evidently a further reference to the fact that the honourable family was experiencing hard times.

I have not seen the book, but I thought you would like to know of its celebrity as your reading is very various.—Yours sincerely,

MONTAGU.

PISTOLS FOR TWO

THE tragi-comedy of pistols for two as the very unsatisfactory "satisfaction" of contemporary affairs of honour is the claim for inclusion of the next two letters, which are also a foretaste of Lockhart as the London reporter to Abbotsford. Both Scott and his faithful son-in-law were nearly involved in duels. The Christie mentioned in our first account shot dead John Scott, the editor of "Baldwin's Magazine," in a duel in 1821 which followed a threatened meeting between the latter and Lockhart. The two last-mentioned did a lot of challenging, and kept their seconds (Christie for Lockhart) running to and fro, but never faced each other's pistol. Robert Louis Stevenson charged Lockhart with cowardice and caddishness in the affair, but subsequently modified his criticism on reading Professor Saintsbury's reasoned defence of the biographer. In the case of the second duel, between the Duke of Wellington and Lord Winchelsea, it should be added that only the air was hit, with the sequel described. Lockhart's cynicism in the two letters will be noted:

From John Gibson Lockhart

25, PALL MALL,
June 17, 1826.

MY DEAR SIR,—Sophia was made happy yesterday by your letter, and Charles has received the draft for £10 enclosed in yours to me. . . I need not say how much we are gratified with your account of your own affairs. I never could doubt your star.[1]

You will receive, with this I suppose, No. 67 of the "Quarterly"—of which I can be no judge; but which does not, I think, contain any thing with which anybody can be offended. If Murray were dead or locked up, something might indeed be done: but he is a sore botheration in every possible way and shape. . .[2]

By the bye Christie's brother-in-law, Daniel Connor, has shot in a duel his next door neighbour—Squire Captain Daunt; and his letter to Christie on the occasion is the most extraordinary specimen of Irish Life I have ever seen. Connor and his Second had kept the secret; but, on reaching the field, found some hundreds of spectators, all friends of the enemy, drawn up in regular file on the two sides of the scene. Connor's first shot knocked off the Captain's hat; the second pierced the coat and waistcoat; the third the

[1] Sophia, Scott's elder daughter, was married in 1820 to Lockhart, now editor of the "Quarterly Review." Charles is the novelist's younger son, up at Brasenose. The congratulations are upon the success of Scott's first efforts following his financial disaster, when he turned to new literary undertakings.

[2] John Murray the second; publisher of Byron and Scott; and proprietor of the "Quarterly."

forehead. He says "we then went home *to dinner*, and in the course of the evening I had a polite note from the Uncle and Father-in-law of Daunt informing me the funeral was to be next morning in order that there might be no bother of inquests; and that the family, being perfectly satisfied with my conduct, would of course consider any attempt to disturb me as a personal insult to themselves."

They have been reporting, but I believe absurdly, that Brougham is mad. At all events the fit must have been short, for the Westmorland Election next winter is to be a scene of grandest uproar. Dr. Maginn has been taken down to Lowther hall to assist in the Squibbery, and I think Wordsworth and he will make pretty homogeneous work of it, for the great Laker also is enlisted—if report speaks truly.

Southey in tears

Southey was here lately, has gone to Holland for three weeks, and will then be in Town for some time. When he spoke of you *the tears fairly ran over his cheeks*, which will make me while I live a lover of the Laureate.

In regard to Shakespeare, I should be very sorry to take *advantage* of Constable's Bankruptcy to break an engagement which those of right coming into his shoes wished to stand entire—even if it were a bad bargain. But I think it on the whole a good one, and this, with the complete understanding which I had from the beginning, that you were to receive the sum stipulated for your *Life* and Preface viz., I think, £1,500. Besides nearly half *my* work was done, ere the printing was stopped, and unless the book goes on again I cannot expect any remuneration for the labour already expended, except £100 which Constable paid me about a year ago, finding it, as he then said, for his convenience to settle for each volume as soon as completed. Four volumes are printed now, and I never knew until I had my agent's accounts lately that he had not paid for the whole of them in their succession. Now, I can't afford to set to work again unless something be done as to this—I mean, unless I see a proper written contract undertaking for the payment of what is past as well as what is to come. But if that be arranged properly I have MS nearly to keep Ballantyne at work for a month or two and will forward it to him without delay.[1]—Yours affectionately,

J. G. LOCKHART.

[1] This edition of Shakespeare, of which Lockhart was editor, is a mystery of publishing. It just disappeared; and Constable's son believed that the work was sold for wastepaper.

[Sir Walter's Hussar son writes to his father from Canterbury, on September 30th, 1827, with reference to a fierce controversy over Scott's nine-volume *Life of Napoleon* that nearly brought the principals to the duelling-ground :]

" I saw in the papers General Gourgaud's tirade and your settler. The general appeared so full of wrath that I almost expected to hear of his posting through this town bound for the North. As you have incurred the wrath of a good many of Buonaparte's old officers, I think the family ought to be divided into the writing and the fighting departments. I am excellently posted for intercepting the enemy ; and those that pass Charles [his younger brother] might take in hand and finish. It would be a capital subject for a tenth vol.—a brief sketch of the Lives of a few of Buonaparte's most celebrated generals, dispatched by the author and his family."

From John Gibson Lockhart

LONDON,
March 25th, 1829.

MY DEAR SIR,—There is no reason to expect a duel every day, and all has been very quiet since Saturday. The letter was utterly forgotten till this recalled it to remembrance. *Ergo* there was no sort of call on the Duke, after beating Buonaparte, to go to war with a Booby. But he could not stand the fling at the fair. His correspondence seems admirable every way, and the whole affair was gone thro' in excellent taste. The Duke and Hardinge trotting out—the two peaceful Lords tumbling down in a coach and four. The Duke had no halfpence, and was followed and bothered for some time by the Tollman on Battersea Bridge when Hardinge fished out some silver, or a groom came up. There were various market-gardeners on the road who, when Lord Winchelsea's equipage stopped, stopped also and looked on. One of them advised a turn-up with Nature's weapons. The moment all was done, the Duke clapped spurs to his horse, and was back in Downing Street within the 2 hours—breakfasted—and off for Windsor, where he transacted business for an hour or so, and then said : " By the bye, I was forgetting : I have had a Field day with Lord W. this morning." They say the King rowed Arthur much for exposing himself at such a crisis. Such is the gossip of the Club.

The King angry with Wellington

These worthy receptacles are now occupied with another affair. Lord Anglesea's daughter Harriet married Byng, eldest son to Sir E. a week ago, and is already back to Papa. There are 2

Editions. One, favoured by Mrs. Alexander &c., that the young Lady went into hysterics at bedtime, and declared her affections were bestowed elsewhere: she had been married perforce, and she would have nothing to say to the Gentleman *en particulier*. The other, less romantic—but all things considered as probable, and patronized in St. James' Street—is that after a few nights Mr. Byng charged the Lady with being some months gone with child, and that she confessed the fact. In either story Lady Harriet's gallant is Lord Erroll (a married man, of course) who had been in Ireland as one of the papa's aides-de-camp. So much for paternal example and our *pleasant vices*.

"Our pleasant vices"

I am concerned to say that poor Johnny is not at all well at present. But Ferguson will not let us speak as if he were seriously ill. He, however, suffers much.[1] All the rest are well here. Poor Terry is getting weaker and weaker, and I have just heard of Mrs. Hughes being in town again, which will certainly do his business.[2]—Yours affectionately,

J. G. LOCKHART.

SIR ROBERT PEEL AND THE CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION

SIR ROBERT PEEL for years successfully opposed Catholic emancipation; and we have him here ruminating on the whirligig of politics and public opinion which led to a change in his attitude and to his introduction of the Bill granting the relief. The Clare election in the previous June caused extraordinary excitement because of the anti-Catholic oaths which Members had to take. Priests attended the booths with crucifixes in their hands; and the Catholic candidate O'Connell overwhelmingly defeated the Minister Fitzgerald. Scott was one of the great Tories who backed the Whig leaders of the petition in favour of emancipation, "for half measures do but linger out the feud":

From Sir Robert Peel

WHITEHALL,
April 3rd, 1829.

Private and Confidential.

MY DEAR SIR WALTER,—I shall be most happy in availing myself of any opportunity that may offer of encouraging literature in Scotland—and particularly the Church of Scotland—by the pre-

[1] Lockhart's elder boy, a delicate child of lively imagination, for whom Scott wrote the *Tales of a Grandfather*.

[2] The unfortunate actor was dying; and that amiable gossip Mrs. Hughes was sure to be first in at the death. We shall meet her again.

ferment of Mr. McKay.[1] I have one young man on my List—for whom I am anxious exclusively on that ground to provide—a Mr. Paterson, whose prize essay on a classical subject I read with great pleasure. He gained the Prize offered by the University Commissioners. In truth, however, according to the existing usage the Crown has no Church Patronage in Scotland, and I doubt much if the real interests of that Church are promoted by the servile deference that it has been the custom to pay to the wishes of ignorant or interested Heritors. Sometimes they are good enough to squabble among themselves, and then I step in with a third Candidate—to the confusion of the contending Parties. I am sorry to say, however, that they have found me out, and that they generally contrive to reconcile their differences before the day of nomination arrives.

Objection to Church Patronage

Who would have guessed that I should be the bearer of the Roman Catholic Relief Bill to the Lords. However, it was necessary that I should be the Bearer of it. I wish you had been present at the Clare Election, for no pen but yours could have done Justice to that fearful exhibition of sobered and desperate enthusiasm. " Be true " was the watchword, which, uttered by a priest or an agitator, calmed in an instant " the stormy wave of the multitude " and seduced the freeholder from his allegiance to his Protestant Landlord.

We were watching the movements of tens of thousands of disciplined fanatics, abstaining from every excess and every indulgence and concentrating every passion and feeling on one single object—with hundreds of Police and of soldiers, half of whom were Roman Catholics. That half, faithful and prepared I have no doubt to do their duty; but is it consistent with common prudence or common sense to repeat such scenes and to incur such risk of contagion?

I knew too much to make it possible for me to take any other course than that which I have taken. The time is past when either party can coquet any longer with the Catholic Question. *Hic locus est—partes ubi se via findit in ambas.* God grant that *Hac iter Elysium nobis.*[2] You will think I am run mad on the Catholic Question. Your name was of the utmost value—had more weight

[1] " This comes of kith and kin and ally, but Peel shall know of it," Scott wrote in his Journal when, on a previous occasion, the authorities had ignored the claims of this " learned and excellent preacher " Mackay to a Crown appointment, which was given elsewhere owing to family influence.

[2] See *Æneid*, book vi., ll. 540–542.

than any other single name. The mention of it, as attached to the Edinburgh Petition, was received with loud Cheers.

What can I do about your Picture which I must place in my Gallery of contemporary Portraits by Sir Thomas Lawrence. I want it more than ever, for he has just finished for me a Portrait of Southey, and he is scowling vengeance at me for my apostacy and so forth.—Ever my dear Sir Walter, most faithfully yours,

ROBERT PEEL.

HIGH LIFE AT "NEW" BRIGHTON

LEST it be too readily believed that traffic dangers and disagreements came in with motor-cars, this amusing letter from young Major Scott is inserted. Brighton was then not only new, but in the full glory of being the fashionable resort of Southern England. The Anne to whom he writes is his unmarried sister, who, after Lady Scott's death, devotedly presided over the Abbotsford ménage. Jane, who was doing herself so well, is—of course—his wife; and the ample old lady, her mother. The reference to the Sinclairs will be better appreciated when the reader comes to the group of letters "Marriage and Scandal-à-la-Mode."

From Walter Scott, Jun. 12, NEW BRIGHTON,

Monday Morning, 5th October, [1829].

DEAR ANNE,—I met Miss Alexander yesterday, and she told me that she had received a letter from her mother in which she said that Sophia was very unwell from a reuhmatic fever. I wish you would harness your lazy fingers to one of Bramah's patent pens,[1] and let me know the truth of the report. I was happy to hear that Johnny was better. My sweet temper, like the weather, is very unsettled; and my motions equally so. I have done little lately but fuss and fidget from morning to night; and, by way of variety, ride to Chichester to sign returns, &c., as I am determined not to count this as leave, and I do just duty enough to swear by. This place is very full, and from four to ½ past five it is scarcely possible to make way through the mob, whilst a string of carriages and Flys within an inch of the footpath renders any deviation from it dangerous, and envelopes everything in clouds of dust.

I had to sell a horse the other day, and got 30 guineas for him, I having given 80 for him a year-and-a-half ago, and refused that sum not very long ago at a public auction.

Jane is fattening on Shrimps, Prawns and bottled porter, and the old lady herself is in an awful state of *pinguitude*. She positively

[1] Refers to an early type of fountain pen invented by Joseph Bramah, whose name is more familiar in connection with his famous lock. Neither Bramah's patent pen nor the steel nib ousted the quill for general use until after the middle of the century.

shakes the room when she walks accross it, and her sitting down endangers the beams and rafters of the house. If the house was my property I would insure, if any office could be found to insure it without an exhorbitant premium or under the head of doubly dangerous.

I shall now go and take a hour on the Chain Pier. It has been blowing great guns all night, and there is a high wind still. Perhaps the motion may be too much for my delicate stomach ; but it must be very wholesome, especially after kipper at breakfast. The Sinclairs have been here, but it was not my fortune to meet them ; or rather it was my fortune not to meet them. I did hear a report of three of them having been seen in a one-horse fly, but I can scarcely give credit for it. If the driver of the fly had not the fear of Dick Martin's art before his eyes he must at least have had some respect to his master's property, unless—to be sure—he was a very dishonest and careless Flyman.

One-horse fly thrills

Bye-the-bye, one is very often amused here by the upsetting of a close fly ; and the distress occasioned to the enclosed parties is very amusing, as there is no danger attending the operation, the Fly never coming completely over but reposing at an angle of 45° on two of its wheels. Has any thing been heard of Mrs. Carpenter's motions ?

Has she gone off to India ? by way of a morning sail, or is she in Europe, Asia, Africa or America. I mentioned in my letter to Papa that the king intends coming down for a month or two. I wonder he can give up his fish-pond at Virginia Water for so long a time. Old Kemp, of Kemp Town, is much inclined to be civil, and if we were staying here I think we would find it very pleasant, but I remain only as long as I can get free quarters. Love to all—Your affectionate Brother,

WALTER SCOTT.

THE OLD ORDER CHANGETH

INTO our mosaic from the Abbotsford Letter-Books must be fitted these glimpses of the Reform agitation amid the angry half-starved workers and the new factory chimneys. The following three letters to the novelist from a London Society woman and from his son, Major Scott, must have seemed as ominous to the Laird of Abbotsford as they are interesting to read 100 years later. The spirit of the age penetrated even to the feudalistic atmosphere of his library, with men like Laidlaw, his secretary, and Cadell, his publisher. On the one hand was respectful and affectionate forbearance for a man who represented the best in the

old and doomed order: on the other, distrust for the new order, with a suspicion that it perhaps might not turn out altogether badly. It was the drama of not a few homes in an age when even ducal families were divided on the great issue. Scott wrote in his Journal on the passing of the Reform Bill: "It has fallen easily, the old Constitution; no bullying Mirabeau to assail, no eloquent Maury to defend. It has been thrown away like a child's broken toy. Well, *transeat*: the good sense of the people is much trusted to; we will see what it will do for us. The curse of Cromwell on those whose conceit brought us to this pass."

From the Hon. Mrs. Cadogan 16, PARK LANE, LONDON,
April 25th, 1831.

MY DEAR SIR,—. . I have to announce the death of the Dss. of Wellington yesterday. What a fate her's has been.[1] But I will leave these subjects, and congratulate you on your escape from the Newspaper infliction. I assure [you] until I heard the welcome truth at Mrs. Lockhart's door, and afterwards from herself, we were calculating the chances of *perfect recovery* or of your growing like Mathews, and I gravely came to the decision that the wryness of mouth would only add more salt to your pen, and most happy were we to hear that it was a wanton trifling with the feelings of the Public.[2] The use we make of the liberty of the Press disgusts one with all liberty. We are going to have a surfeit, I fear, for I am but a bad Whig wife.

When Lord Albemarle told the Equerry to tell the Coachman the state coaches were to be in readiness in two hours, the answer was: tell the King it is impossible, the tails and manes take 5 hours to plait. So the Hanoverians for the 1st time in their lives swept the streets with their tails. When the K [*i.e.*, William IV] in his speech came to the sentence of *my People* the last words were thunder'd at the Lords. He put on his crown against all etiquette, and even the foes of "*Reform Bill*" allow that his manner, his entrance in the middle of the uproar, was very Dramatic and well done. We went to Lansdowne House that night, and the 1st groups we met with consisted of Lords Lansdowne and Mansfield, both laughing, and Brougham and Lord Wharncliffe looking like Lovers. Ministers count on 58 Majority[3]; others say that Lds. Mansfield and Carnarvon will *bother* them—but *fatto sta* that since

Reform Bill's dramatics

[1] Her marriage was not a happy one, the Duke considering himself bound in an earlier affection, and learning that the Duchess had previously been engaged.

[2] Scott, earlier in the month, had a severe paralytic seizure. Mathews = the actor.

[3] The Reform Bill was carried in the Commons by 1 vote: in the Lords the majority against it was 41.

Friday last the Tories are less convinced that we are on the eve of Revolution, less violent, less triumphant ; and now we hear only 9 great families are to be min'd by the ensuing Elections. Peel has put down £60,000 and Lord Beauchamp £50,000 for [the] noble purpose of bribery and preserving the purity of the Constitution and freedom of Election. Lord Dudley, who has no Borough to lose and 2 seats to gain, opposes the Measure. There are other instances of integrity amidst shameful selfishness, pride, and obstinacy. A slight yielding on the part of the ultra Tories would have staved off this odious measure. I cannot believe they are guided by *one* spark of Patriotism ; but this applies only to a few. Talking of Lord Dudley, I was told the other day of a pretty saying of his : at the time of those failures which caused you embarrassment Lord D. suggested that if every person who could say they had derived more delight from your works than from any other they ever read subscribed 6*d*. a vol., the necessary sum would soon be completed. Now *I* like the idea, tho' I dare say you will " sing a song a' sixpence," and like the bag of Rye better.

The price of purity

We have not been much out, but we have been to Court, and my daughters were thought very pretty. They are unable however to profit by the Ball to-night, having both of them bad and disfiguring colds ; but if we all live 8 weeks we shall have 4 more Balls. London promises ill for this year, which I regret because the only use I see of London is for young Ladies to Dance—for every other purpose it is the most disagreeable place I know, and that is saying a great deal. I always feel hurried, and busied, and worried, and uninterested. I am too infirm for bustle, the climate, the hours and the hot rooms kill me and take away all my spirits tho' I have the advantage of a cheerful airy house looking into the prettiest part of the Park.

How are you, my Dear Sir ? Have you a breathing of Spring yet ? Do your three Hills look green ? Does your Yarrow glitter in the morning sun ? Does Bran destroy the young Leverets, and do you enjoy yourself *pretty well* amidst so many beauties and comforts ? I hope you do, but I am sorry to see the evil spirit of sport and scrambling [over] moors and hills, is still at work, and won't let you enjoy the idleness of a comfortable sociable drive.[1] I wish you felt like a French Lady who we accused of not saying

[1] The famous and mysterious Eildon Hills, near Melrose, where the great scholar Michael Scott the Wizard is said to have been buried after his European wanderings. Bran was the deerhound given to Scott by Macpherson of Cluny.

her Prayers at night : "*Ah j'aime trop mon Lit pour ne pas remercier le bon Dieu de m'en avoir donné.*" I do not preach without practise, for having been for 5 years unable to walk fast or much on account of *Heart*, I really enjoy my carriage and spring cushions when I see others trudging. So pray let me find you reconciled to your negative comforts, and we will drive to Yarrow braes, and maybe toddle along them. . . Perhaps you remember my talking to you of a species of Demon I had not heard of before I read *Hans d'Islande*.[1] I do not think he is named in Fable, and, beside the great charm of Novelty (supposing him unknown to you), the book is reckoned correct as to manners, locality, and geography, or topography, I should say, I believe. I thought you might just look at it, and the 4 Volumes are an hour's easy work, easier than this long letter which I must now close. . . Believe me, dear Sir, most faithfully, yours obliged, &c.

H. L. CADOGAN.

From Walter Scott, Jun.

BIRMINGHAM,
15th December, [1830].

DEAR PAPA,—We are at last settled here, for probably a fortnight or thereabouts, and then I expect to go to Coventry, which seems rather a cleaner town, and has this advantage that we can get into Barracks. At present we are living in a small Lodging in the Town, about fifteen feet by ten, and a long mile from the Barracks, through the dirtiest streets in this dirty town.

The Political Union meetings are frequent, and fortunately go off quietly ; but they are the means of collecting together crowds of what "John Bull" calls the great Unwashed. The Magistrates consider it best to leave them quite alone ; the more respectable class are separating themselves from the Blackguards, with whom they were united. They are quarrelling amongst themselves, and it is hoped that before long this political Union will fall to pieces of its own accord altho' they still assemble in great numbers. Banbury is quiet, and the troops we had there leave it today. At Manchester there is a great turn out of operatives ; and at Wolverhampton the people are much discontented. Orders have come down for the Inspecting Field Officer on the Recruiting Service to use his utmost endeavours to obtain men ; and by an order from the Horse Guards, we are to send out two parties and complete our Establishment without delay, which had been reduced not

"The Great Unwashed"

[1] *i.e.*, *Hans of Iceland*, Victor Hugo's first novel, 4 vols., 1823.

three months before. Tonight Jane and I are going to a Ball given by the High Bailiff, which is I suppose another name for the Lord Mayor. He is like all the people about here—a great merchant and I daresay will give a very good entertainment.

"Swing" and his letters

I hope Mr. "Swing," [1] from whom I had a letter this morning, will not take the opportunity of putting his threats into execution, and burning the Barracks, cutting our throats, and fifty other disagreeable things announced with an oath to every other word. This week or the next, whichever suits him best, he has appointed for these laudable purposes; and he mentions that there is a *sweeping* plot ready to break out for our extermination. The letter is scrawled, but is written by one who can write well if he chuses. I see the Manchester turn out has been the greatest that ever took place, and many went armed. I think it must come to sharps at last, if 20,000 men and upwards assemble in that manner to insist on a rise in their wages; [and] if they are to be given into in one case, the masters may as well throw up the business altogether. Fix, if possible, a scale of wages, but first let them know that they cannot obtain a rise by their great assemblies and tumult.

I must now finish my epistle as I have just received a letter from the Colonel to be answered immediately, and an injunction to write circulars to the outquarter people relative to recruiting. I have not heard from the F.O. for some time [2]; but suppose he is enjoying himself in basking in the sun and enjoying the good things of Naples. The death of the Pope, I suppose, will put a stop to their gaieties for a little. Love to Anne, whose face I hope continues getting better. Jane joins me in kind love,—and believe me your affectionate Son

W. Scott.

P.S.—A very great dealer in houses and a supposed wealthy character who has one of the finest establishments in England, has gone off. He farmed the House and Tea duties &c. for several counties, and either a great defalcation or a forgery has taken place: it creates quite a sensation. Crowds of people went up to the barracks yesterday in the humane hope of seeing a man shot who has not as yet been tried. He is a soldier in Rose's troop at out-

[1] An historic pseudonym associated with the social unrest of this period which George Eliot has depicted. Over the signature "Captain Swing," threatening letters were sent wholesale to farmers and landowners, these being followed by the incendiary destruction of ricks and other property. There are many pretended *Lives* of "Swing."

[2] *i.e.*, from his brother Charles, on the Foreign Office staff.

quarters ; and, being drunk, drew his sword on his Serjeant-Major who fortunately behaved with temper. I am president of the Court Martial ; and shall be sorry to disappoint our Brummagem friends, but have no idea of sentencing him to be shot.

From the same SHEFFIELD,
Sunday, 27th, [1831].

DEAR PAPA,—We have again returned to the smoky slums of Sheffield, but have not, as yet, found either house or home. There are too many officers present with this Squadron to allow of my resuming my four rooms in Barracks, without turning some one out, and as one or two of them are not quite so quiet and well behaved as my former set (in which I remember two lovers), I am not anxious about it. One would imagine that in a large town like Sheffield a lodging or a house might be had without difficulty, but I assure you I have been in every place, and street, without success : they are so beastly dirty. And if we take an unfurnished house there is no one who lets furniture, but we must manage some way or other for a few months when I trust the General will realize his threat of discontinuing this as a Cavalry quarter ; indeed I cannot conceive why Cavalry should be there, as it is a very hilly and closely intersected country, where we could be of little use unless for the protection of the Guns. These Horse Artillery fly over every thing. By going out with them once or twice last year, I picked up a few hints as to positions from an old stager of theirs who had been through the campaign in Spain.

I am very sorry to see the Reform Question carried *even* by the miserable majority of one, but it is to be hoped that it will undergo very great alteration before it passes the Committee. We staid a day or two at Draycott on our way here. There was a great meeting to be held at Derby two or three days ago, and the Duke of Devonshire took the trouble to come down from town and deliver his sentiments in *favour* of Reform. The address proposed by the Duke was headed " At a Meeting of the Nobility and Gentry of the Co. of Derby." This did not *please* the people, and a weaver proposed as an amendment that it should stand " At a meeting of the people and inhabitants of the Co. of Derby "—which amendment was seconded by another operative, and the Nobility and Gentry gave way to the people.[1] Chatsworth will afford fine

A Reformed Address

[1] If the ducal opening was a blunder, the Reformed effort was hardly a prize-winner.

pickings for the latter, in the course of a few years, when the discovery is made that it is neither just nor equitable, one man's possessing such immense wealth and property, whilst thousands are destitute. The people are all quiet here and well employed, which is a thousand times better for them than giving them Members, or increasing their political rights, the one ensuring them frequent contested elections and their attendant scenes of drunkenness, and the other setting the lower [classes] squabbling in pot-houses about politics when their attention and time might be much more profitably employed.

Love to Anne, whose throat I hope gets better. Bye the bye, as I understand that Hollands are your particular tipple [1] I shall make you a present of a few gallons I got from that old vagabond of a smuggler McKinnon three or four years ago. If you think them worth your acceptance, I shall write to Bayley to send them to you. They are I believe in Shandwick Place and may be tolerable. I hope you persevere in Abercrombie's regimen; and altho' the wing of a fowl with the occasional luxury of boiled rice and a bit of fish be not very tempting viands still I suppose by the time I visit you, which will probably be (as last year) about your birthday, you will be again permitted a moderate glass of claret and a Christian-like allowance of food. I heard lately from the F.O. who is well, and writes from his palazzo in good spirits.[2] Jane and Luncheon have just entered the room together, so with love from the one and turning my attention to the other,—I remain, your affectionate Son,

W. Scott.

THE MEDIÆVAL, AND THE NEW MARGATE STEAMER

Our first group of letters concludes with a contrast of the times. The application from a man to serve Scott as a hermit is the passing of the old; and B. R. Haydon's letter, with its snapshot of the wonderful Margate steamer, is the coming of the new. Richard Hunter does not reappear, for hermits had gone out of fashion long since. But the famous Haydon we shall meet again in some remarkable letters:

From Richard Hunter [Postmark, 1831.]

Dear Sir,—It was reported to me that you wanted a Hermit, and if you want one I am willing to live as one; and if you want one I hope you will write me the state of a agreement, and the time you

[1] But surely only at this time, when Scott was under the care of Dr. Abercrombie (see pages 367 and 368).

[2] His brother Charles, still on his Continental tour. Jane was his wife.

wish me to live as one. I hope you will write me as soon as posable. I will wate 8 Days on you to write me. My adriss is to Rich. Hunter No. 2 Infarmiry Street, Edinburgh, and if you not need one I hope you will recomend me to some Gentlman that wish one.—I am, Sir, your most obd ser,

RICHARD HUNTER.

From B. R. Haydon 4, BURWOOD PLACE, CONNAUGHT TCE.

Aug. 30, 1831.

MY DEAR SIR WALTER,—This letter should have come by a Friend of yours who kindly offered to take it (Sir William Campbell); but, owing to a mistake, I did not begin it soon enough for him as he left Greenwich by a Smack yesterday, instead of this afternoon. I hope that all the reports of the newspapers are as true as all newspaper reports are, and that you are still as hearty and hale as ever. I really long to see you again, my dear Sir Walter; and if I could afford it, and if I could leave my children, I would run down specifically for that purpose and for no other.

Haydon's uninvited guest

I met Sir William Campbell under very odd circumstances, on board a Margate Steamer. I saw in the morning a very fine venerable old Gentleman, sitting in a box, and when I took my family down to breakfast, found him, on our return, in our cabin. I did not like this, as I thought it a liberty. Sir William saw it, and seemed to think his age and his rank entitled him to take it; but yet the helplessness and innocence of children are to be put in comparison with the infirmity of age. Had he sent his Compt to me and expressed a wish for the shelter of the box, we would have all turned out instantly; but I did not think it fair while we were absent to take possession, though our trunks and cloaks were on the table.

Now came the exhibition of character, which *you* would have relished. Sir William, finding I did not seem pleased, called all his Servants, damned one, and scolded the other; and told them to bring the Ladies. The Ladies came, but still I was not moved, I did not express myself honored, and Sir William's politeness getting the better [of him], he complimented Mrs. Haydon and told her she had a fine family, which of course went to our hearts at once. We now became all gracious, he lighted his pipe with *her* leave, apologised for his rudeness, and for the remainder of our sail, we tried to make him as comfortable as possible. In short he was much gratified and so were we; and it all ended by

his inviting us to come and see him and offering to take a letter to you.

What a scene is this Margate Steamer! It will be my next Comic Picture—viz.: A Margate Steamer after a gale. *Land! Land!* The band of musicians Hogarth could not have invented—and then the Cocknies of every shape, size, trade, and calling! One wondering at the Sea, the other at the Sky; one at the Steam, and the other at the paddles. And as a specimen, Sir Walter, of the utter indifference of the English for everything that is not reducible to the Ledger! After the musicians had play'd and played well—and one or two things beautifully—when they came with their money-box to collect their reward, an old Cockney, with his hat tied under his chin and a basket full of ham and brandy, turned round towards them, and said with an air of ineffable superiority: "I never encourage such *wagabonds*." This is a fact, and is the sum total of all English feeling for Poets, Painters, or Musicians—and their real estimation of their respective inspirations. I am convinced that nine people out of ten consider Paganini a *wagabond* of the very first order.

I hope you will visit London again. The death of George IV has been to us a blow too serious effectually to be recovered. As to myself, he told poor Lord Graves, "I never had fair play,[1] and he be damned if I should not." These [were] his own words, expressed with his own spirit. Though the people in London owe to him most of their enjoyments as regards water, air, and walks, and all their architectural improvements, see with what base ingratitude he is always spoken of. His present Majesty has no taste, and thinks it a trifle. We shall see how high we shall stand at his Death. Things are getting into a pretty mêlée, yet I cannot help thinking the obstinacy of our Party in resisting all reform has been as injurious as the blindness of those who wish nothing else. In the struggle the Arts will be forgotten, and sink. I hope not, but fear it. With an earnest wish that you may live through,—your affectionate and grateful Friend,

London's debt to George IV

B. R. HAYDON.

[1] Apparently true, judging from Haydon's letter about his Royal patron (see pages 175 and 176).

THE TROUBLES AND TRIUMPHS OF POETS

From William Wordsworth . Return from first meeting with Scott—First impressions of Southey—Critics to be criticised —No mercy—First draft of a sonnet.

Of Coleridge—Prefers pocket-size books—Publishing with reluctance—Indifferent to reception—Writing on the same subject as Scott—M. Paoli—The struggle on the Continent.

Scott's entanglements—His *Life* of Dryden—Harte's notes—Criticism of Dryden—An idle summer—Jeffrey a poor creature—Warning.

Anxiety for *Marmion*—Scott's antiquarianism —Domestic trouble—In London—Queer fish at Longmans' dinner—A distressing accident.

Acknowledges donation from Scott—Verdict on *Marmion*—A misquotation—More on the Dryden—Scott's unjust censure on Thomas Heywood.

Dorothy Wordsworth . Dispute with William over visit to Lichfield—Her " recollections " of Anna Seward.

William Wordsworth . Denies visit to Lichfield—Scott's memory in error—His physical fitness—His family.

Robert Southey . . Thanks Scott for spreading his fame—An invitation to join Constable—Poor results from his poems—Wordsworth's poetry.

On duelling—Single combat approved—Desire to see Wellesley in power—The cursed spirit of Party—Threats to eclectics and vice-society men—On reviews.

How he became Poet Laureate—Salary a godsend—Thanks to Scott—Both at the top of the hill.

His Scottish tour—Another crop of Wordsworthian Odes—His own springs not dry.

The country in danger—Promises himself a bonfire on Skiddaw—His plan to encourage literature—On new books.

From James Hogg (the Ettrick Shepherd)

Desire to rise above mediocrity—Constable's neglect—Thoughts of a farm.

Scott's advancement in fortune—His own failure—A Scott admirer—Working under difficulties.

Abhors criticisms and revision of his poems—Scott's observation d——d nonsense—His particular temper.

Military ambitions—Or an official post—Cheap way of reading *Marmion*—Jeffrey's bitter review—Request for £3.

Despondent—On friends—A plan to tax the Ballantynes—Anonymous gift of £5—Lines on his dog—Another plan for a book.

His paper *The Spy*—Offers to suppress attacks on Scott—Asks Scott's sympathy and help.

Great nonsense for the two friends to be enemies—Apology for intemperate letter.

His work rejected—Judged by the *Waverley* standard—In trouble with his farm—Wants £350 in cash—Another publishing plan—St. Boswell's Fair.

Thomas Campbell

Acknowledges loan of £50—His tolerable prospects—Domestic happiness—Early life a devil of a scene—Secret literary project—Samuel Rogers hides behind the sofa.

Projected *Lives of the British Poets*—Constable, the butteraceous bookseller—Suckers of living men's brains—Asks Scott's views.

Delight in *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*—Desperate scenes with the cook—Hurled out of doors—Adventure on Sydenham Common.

Introduces a friend—Repudiates rumour of marriage with a blue-stocking—Thomas Moore blamed.

THE TROUBLES AND TRIUMPHS OF POETS

Wordsworth, Southey, Hogg, and Campbell

Here are the Poets of the Lakes and Forests. Wordsworth—welcoming spring's first thrush in the Vale, stiffening himself to indifference about the reception of his work, but roused to kicking pitch by that "creature" Jeffrey. Southey—cheerful and content so long as he can buy bread and butter and books; piling up his annotated poems by the thousand lines. The Ettrick Shepherd—magically inspired, materially deluded; ever in need, looking to Sir Walter as his Scottish saviour. And Campbell—pitting a poet's brains against the schemes of "bloodsuckers." Consider! Scott was junior to Wordsworth and Hogg by a year, and only four and six years older than Southey and Campbell respectively. His books sold in thousands, while those of his four friends dribbled out to the public in scores. If they wrote to him with all the affection of revered friendship, they brought their troubles as to one whom the gods (as well as the world) loved—as to one whose word commanded aid or at least a present comfort. That, excepting Wordsworth, so many of their troubles were concerned with the material rewards for their writings, is symptomatic of the age, which made authorship a greater gamble even than when Dr. Johnson sold Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield* for sixty guineas. The speculation mania of the period spread to the increasingly active publishing houses. Successful authors like Scott and Byron were paid unheard-of sums for their works. Here we have Southey resignedly confessing that his long epic poem *Madoc* brought him twenty-five pounds in two years. For *Rokeby* Scott received 3,000 guineas. A century later finds no such proportionate difference between the numbers of readers of the two poems—to carry the chilling comparison no farther. As for men like Wordsworth and Keats, whose works once circulated only among their friends and a few diligent seekers, how different is the story of their unending reprints!

Such is the lottery of literature, which persists but little less to-day when authorship has its organisation and the world flatters

itself on enlightenment. But the sprinkled sand took longer to dry the ink of these letters than the troubles of the writers to vanish before the courage of their philosophy. How insistent is the underlying note of confidence in their labours whose Judgment Day was not yet. Scott writing at heart-breaking speed, and with perhaps more preoccupations than all four together, responded nobly. He interceded with the almighty Jeffrey for Wordsworth; put Southey before himself with his royal patroness, and also ensured him the Laureateship; and sent dear money and fatherly advice to Hogg and Campbell. But he was a poet, too, and had his own troubles, which after his brilliant evolution as the world's first novelist were to gather mountainous in proportion to his success. There is a revealing passage in his Diary for so late as 1827: "I do not compare myself, in point of imagination, with Wordsworth—far from it; for his is naturally exquisite, and highly cultivated by exercise. But I can see as many castles in the clouds as any man, as many genii in the curling smoke of a steam engine, as perfect a Persepolis in the embers of a sea-coal fire. . ." Doubtless the rest of the group and many poets outside it could also see as many castles in the clouds. Some, we know, were over-confident of their immortality for that reason.

In the letters of these poets again appears the wizened figure of that judge of early nineteenth-century literature—Francis Jeffrey, the editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, whose justice was mingled with something of the brutality and callous levity of that Judge Jeffreys of the Bloody Assize. "I think I shall read my doom in that mighty arbitrator of the present day, the 'Edinburgh Review,' before I venture farther," says Hogg.[1] It is an echo of the times, which accepted the pomposities of the reviewers with incredible deference. But not everyone bowed to the little Whig. "Jeffrey, I hear, has written what his admirers call a crushing review of *The Excursion*. He might as well seat himself upon Skiddaw, and fancy he had crushed the mountain," writes Southey, who also came under the lash. Posterity has assuredly given the kicking to Jeffrey's reputation which the goaded Wordsworth prophesied. It has also applied some salve to it in recognition of criticism not without its good effects—and honest, even at the risk of friendship. The *Edinburgh*, moreover, was never at worst so rabidly brutal as the *Quarterly Review*. Nor was it Jeffrey who told Keats that it was a better and wiser thing to be a starved apothecary than a starved poet, and ordered him "back to the shop

[1] To Scott, in a letter which I have not used.

Mr. John, back to plasters, pills and ointment boxes." That was the bludgeon of "Blackwood's" at work; the *Quarterly* used the stiletto. There has been much argument whether or not these attacks helped to push Keats into his consumptive's early grave—as they might debate whether a crucifixion is not beneficial in stretching the limbs.

William Wordsworth (1770–1850)

Wordsworth was not a good letter-writer unless he had a favourite subject to mount, when he could be away with some freedom. His correspondence with Scott was mainly confined—and spasmodic at that—to the period of 1803–8. He was then in his thirties, settled with his wife and his sister Dorothy in that little cottage at Grasmere where the "stillness of the sheltering grove" is now broken by the jingle of admission fees and the rattles of charabanc sightseers. He was deep in the composition of his "Ode to Duty," the "Intimations of Immortality," and the Sonnets. He had been impressed with Scott's *Last Minstrel*; and there is frequently expressed anxiety for *Marmion*. When it came he read it with "lively pleasure"—but not with approval. His letter, here given in its entirety for the first time, has been characterised as one of the most consummate specimens of frog-to-bull impertinence in the annals of literature. Wordsworth's criticism is not very happy; but it is honest. Scott might have taken it amiss, and found his satisfaction in the new idolatry which the Waverley novels brought him. He was too fine a man for that—too sincere an artist. It is true that their correspondence languished somewhat after he had achieved his poetic triumphs; but the friendship held fast, the two visiting each other several times before Wordsworth wrote that noble tribute to his broken and dying friend on his departure to Italy. The interest of the correspondence (which, for one thing, is evidence against the suggestion that Wordsworth did not read widely) practically ends with our two letters, revealing a friendly dispute between the Great Laker and his beloved Dorothy, which was referred to Scott as arbiter. These secure their place here not only for the curiosity of the amusing dispute, but for the poet's glimpse of himself—the tall bony Parnassian of fifty-five stalking gravely over Helvellyn, communing with Nature in the harmony of his marvellous sonnets.

From William Wordsworth

GRASMERE, NEAR KESWICK, CUMBERLAND. October 16th, 1803.

My Dear Sir,—I am a wretched Sinner in Letter writing, and have taken off the whole grace from the present letter by my procrastination. A petty alteration which I wished to make in the sonnet prevented me from writing immediately on our arrival; and the first step being made in transgression, the rest followed of course.

We had a delightful journey home, delightful weather, and a

sweet country to travel through. We reached our own little cottage in high spirits and thankful to God for all his bounties. My Wife and Child were both well, and as I need not say, we had all of us a happy meeting.[1]

We passed Branxholme, your Branxholme we supposed, about 4 miles on this side of Hawick; it looks better in your poem than in its present realities: the situation however is delightful and makes amends for an ordinary Mansion. The whole of the Teviot and the pastoral steeps about Mosshope pleased us exceedingly. The Esk below Langholme is a delicious River, and we saw it to great advantage. We did not omit noticing Johnnie Armstrong's Keep, but his hanging place we miss'd to our great regret.[2] We were indeed most truly sorry that we could not have you along with us into Westmorland. The country was in its full glory, the verdure of the valleys, in which we are so much superior to you in Scotland, was but little tarnished by the season, and the trees were putting on their most beautiful looks. My Sister was quite enchanted, and we often said to each other—what a pity Mr. Scott is not with us!

I had the pleasure of seeing both Coleridge and Southey at Keswick last Sunday. Southey, whom I never saw much of before, I liked much better than I expected; he is very pleasant in his manner, and a man of great reading in old books, poetry, Chronicles, Memoirs, and particularly Spanish and Portuguese. By the bye, he occasionally reviews; and he has at present, among other things, a Poem to review of that very Tytler who made the illiberal attack upon him and Coleridge in the "Edinburgh Magazine" which I shewed you at Liswaide [i.e. Lasswade]: so no mercy for poor Tytler.[3] He has also to review a Vol. of Poems by a somebody Bayley Esqr, which contains a long dull Poem in ridicule of "The Idiot Boy," and in which Squire Bayley has mentioned by name "Mr. Wordsworth, that most simple of all simple Poets": so no mercy for Squire Bayley.[4] But enough of this nonsense.

No mercy from Southey

My sister and I often talk of the happy days which we passed

[1] After the tour in the Highlands made by Wordsworth and his sister, during which the first meeting with Scott took place.

[2] *Vide* Scott's *The Laird's Jock.*

[3] ? Dr. Henry Wm. Tytler. The article was headed "Observations on the Corruptions of Literature"; spoke of the querelous [*sic*], woe-begone strains of Southey, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Loyd, and Co.; and held up Coleridge to ridicule because of his ode to the young foal of an ass.

[4] *Poems*, by Peter Bayley, Jun., Esq. (1803), in which "The Fisherman's Wife" is obviously intended to parody Wordsworth's "The Idiot Boy."

in your company; such things do not occur often in life. If we live we shall meet again, that is my consolation when I think of these things. Do write to me and promise you will come and see us here, and bring Mrs. Scott if you can. At all events we shall look for you certainly. Scotland and England sound like division; do what you can, we really are but neighbours: if you were no farther off and in Yorkshire we should think so. Farewell, my sister joins with me in best remembrance to you and Mrs. Scott. God protect you and all that belongs to you. Your sincere friend, for such I will call myself, though slow to use a word of such solemn meaning to anyone,

W. WORDSWORTH.

Now, as I live, I pity that great Lord,
Whom pure despite of heart could so far please
And love of havoc (for with such disease
Fame taxes him) that he could send forth word
To level with the dust a noble horde
A brotherhood of venerable trees,
Leaving an ancient dome, and towers like these,
Beggar'd and outraged. Many hearts deplor'd
The fate of those old trees; and oft with pain
The Traveller, at this day, will stop and gaze
On wrongs which Nature scarcely seems to heed;
For shelter'd places, bosoms, nooks, and bays,
And the pure mountains, and the gentle Tweed
And the green silent pastures yet remain.[1]

[P.S.] Poor Coleridge was prevented by ill health from walking over to Liswaide. [*i.e.*, Lasswade Cottage, where the poets met.]

From the same COLE ORTON, NEAR ASHBY DE LA ZOUCHE, LEICESTERSHIRE. Nov. 10th, 1806.

MY DEAR SCOTT,—Here I am with my whole family, a flight of 160 miles south! The smallness of my House at Grasmere rendered it impossible to winter in it; and I have availed myself of a kind offer of my Friend Sir G. Beaumont, and taken possession of a House of his for six months; about the end of which time we shall return to Grasmere. I hope to have a sight of the last primroses. You see, therefore, that I cannot profit by your friendly invitation

[1] This is Wordsworth's first draft of his sonnet in "Memorials of a Tour in Scotland," which he was then composing, and is appended to this letter without other mention. Before the sonnet was printed the poet altered the first line to

"Degenerate Douglas! oh, the unworthy Lord!"

supplying a more damning and direct reference to the Duke of Queensberry (Old "Q"), whose devastation of hundreds of acres of noble woods about his Neidpath and Drumlanrig Castles, also deplored by Scott, doubtless benefited the Polls, Peggies, and Kittys of the Haymarket brothels.

to take up my abode with you for any part of the ensuing winter; which most likely I should have been tempted to do if we had remained at Gr[asmere]. I mentioned your request to Coleridge, whom I saw only for a couple of days, and who, I am sorry to say, I did not find either in good health or Spirits. He also will not be able to see you at Edingborough [1] as he returns to London shortly —having some thoughts of giving a course of Lectures at the Royal Institution. If you are likely to see London this winter or next spring I hope you will not pass us going or returning. We are ten miles from Loughborough, which is the nearest place to us the Coaches come to.

The Books of yours which you offer me I may get from Longman if you will give him orders to that effect; but in fact I must tell you that I do not deserve your kindness; for the 2nd Copy of the *Minstrel* I gave away. It was a beautiful Book; but when I wished for another Copy it was for one of a Pocket size. Any Poetry which I like I wish for in that size; to which no doubt yours will one day descend, and then, in spite of the acknowledgement which I have just made, I shall be impudent enough to become a Beggar again.

I am going to the Press with a Volume which Longman will find easy to convey to you [2]; it will consist entirely of small pieces, and I publish with great reluctance, but the day when my long work will be finished seems farther and farther off [3]; and therefore I have resolved to send this Vol. into the world. It would look like affectation if I were to say how indifferent I am to its present reception; but I have a true pleasure in saying to you that I put some value upon it; and hope that it will one day or other be thought well of by the Public. By the bye, you will not be displeased to find that you and I have, as I understand, fallen upon the same subject: the Melancholy catastrophe of the Man and the Dog in the Coves of Helvellyn. What a happy day we had together there! I often think of it with delight.[4]

Reception of his work

I had almost forgotten to request you would employ somebody to transcribe for me those Verses "Seven Daughters had Lord Archibald" &c.; I mean if you think they would have any effect

[1] Wordsworth's usual spelling for Auld Reekie.
[2] The *Poems* (2 vols.) of 1807.
[3] *The White Doe of Rylstone.* It was published in 1815.
[4] Scott and his wife had visited Wordsworth in 1805. The two men climbed Helvellyn, where just before a young man had lost his way and fallen over a precipice, his body being found with his terrier beside it.

in my intended Vol. either for their own sakes or for the sake of variety. I stumbled upon the first draught of that Poem some little time since, and it seemed to me sad stuff; perhaps the more finished Copy which I think you said you have may turn out better. If it gives you any pleasure your judgement shall decide, and I will print it. I must beg of you in this case to send it soon; because it must have an early place, if at all. I have a further interest and reason in making this request as I shall gain by it a letter from you somewhat sooner perhaps.[1]

How glad I am that M. Paoli was still alive when last heard of.[2] He seems not to have nine but ninety lives; I wish he may [return]. I should be most happy to converse with you [and] him together upon the secure banks of the Yarrow or the Tweed. I say secure, and I hope so in spite of the Conquerors of Europe. What deplorable accounts from the Continent! I hope and pray that the struggle we shall have will invigorate us, as it ought to do. Then all will be well; and it will be a blessing: if otherwise, we shall fall—a thing that would break my heart but for this, that we shall deserve it.

Pascal Paoli

My fireside wish to be remembered affectionately to you and Mrs. Scott. Farewell, and heaven bless you,—your sincere friend,

WM. WORDSWORTH.

From the same

GRASMERE,
Janry. 18, 1808.

MY DEAR SCOTT,—I am two Letters in your debt, and therefore ought to write, particularly as you spoke of some painful affairs in which you have been entangled.[3] I hope you have gotten fairly through them by this time. I guess from the advertizements that your Poem is nearly out. How comes on this Dryden? I think the character of the *Annus Mirabilis* as a Poem might be illustrated by some extracts from a long sermon entitled "God's Terrible voice in the City," in which the Fire of London is minutely described.

[1] Wordsworth's Poem, "The Seven Sisters, or the Solitude of Binnorie," tells the story of the seven daughters of Lord Archibald Campbell who was so fond of war that he took no care of them. When a rover from Ireland landed they all fled, and leapt into a lake where they were turned into seven islands. The poem is dated 1804 in the *Poems of the Fancy*.

[2] Pascal Paoli (1725–1807) the Corsican patriot who, on settling in England, became an intimate of the Johnsonian group. After the Revolution he was made Commandant in Corsica; and, on the execution of Louis XVI, drove out the French. His last years were spent in England.

[3] *i.e.*, the financial trouble of Scott's brother, Thomas, to relieve whom the Bard concentrated on *Marmion*, for which the publisher paid 1,000 gns. long before it appeared.

Dryden's is a sorry Poem, and the Sermonist,[1] though with a world of absurdity, has upon the whole greatly the advantage of him. There is in Echard's *History* a most laughable account of Ogilby, who, by the bye, was a countryman of yours.[2] Echard at the end of each year gives an account of every eminent man who had died in the course of it; and Ogilby makes one of a list. He died in Charles the second's time.

" Tom the second reigns like Tom the first " is a fling at Shadwell —" Tom Shadwell's rhymes will serve." In Harte's *Poems* (Anderson's edition) are two or three notes upon Dryden which might be worth looking at. Harte had read Dryden's work with exceeding care, but very little profit. I have a life of Shaftsbury entitled, I believe, *Rawleigh Redivivus*. Should you like to see it ?

Dryden's best works

I am curious to see your notes on Dryden's political Poems, which are in my opinion, far the best of his works, though there is very great merit in his two translations from Boccaccio. Chaucer, I think, he has entirely spoiled, even wantonly deviating from his great original, and always for the worse. Of his plays I do not mean to speak as I know very little about them. As a Translator from the antient classics he succeeds the best with Ovid, next with Juvenal, next with Virgil, and worst of all with Homer. He has, however, done some things with spirit from Horace, and in one or two passages, with first-rate excellence. I have a very high admiration of the talents both of Dryden and Pope, and ultimately, as from all good writers of whatever kind, their Country will be benefited greatly by their labours. But thus far I think their writings have done more harm than good. It will require yet half a century completely to carry off the poison of Pope's Homer. But too much of this. I must say a word of my own employments. After I left you I had a thoroughly idle summer, and part of the Autumn was as idle. But latterly I have been busy, though with many interruptions. I have written a narrative Poem of about 1700 lines : I finished it two days ago.[3]

I am nearly at the end of my sheet, and must say one word of

[1] Thomas Vincent (1634–1678), nonconformist divine and M.A. of Christ Church, Oxford. His *God's Terrible Voice in the City by Plague and Fire*, so favourably compared by Wordsworth with Dryden's poem published the same year (1667), was hardly a sermon, but the 5th edition issued the same year had a discourse annexed to it and a text at the head.

[2] John Ogilby's varied career included occupation as a dancing-master, Master of the Revels, poetaster to Charles II, and bookseller whose house and stock was destroyed in the Fire of London. He was ridiculed not only by Echard, but by Dryden and Pope.

[3] *i.e.*, *The White Doe of Rylstone*, which, eventually, was extended to 1,900 lines.

Mr. Jefferay. In passing through Penrith I had an opportunity of seeing his last Review. I had before skimmed over, some time ago, what he had written in the article on *Thalaba*. I then set [him] down in my mind as a poor Creature, and he has in this last performance shewn himself so utterly contemptible that I should not have adverted to him at all had it not been that I am writing to one personally connected with him. To you therefore I must observe that in the first sentence of what he has said upon my Poem he has shown a gross want of the common feeling of a British Gentleman. He was cordially received by Southey at his home in this Country, and takes the first opportunity of repaying that civility by a base attempt to hold him up to ridicule for residing in that very country where he had entertained the said Jefferay. If Mr. J. continues to play tricks of this kind, let him take care to arm his breech well, for assuredly he runs desperate risque of having it soundly kicked.[1]—Affectionately yours, pray let me hear from you soon.

A risque run by Jeffrey

W. WORDSWORTH.

From the same

GRASMERE,
14th May, 1808.

MY DEAR SCOTT,—It is now little less than three months since a Letter from you arrived at Grasmere. I was then in London where I continued 7 weeks; and should have written to you immediately had I not had reason to suppose, from several Quarters, that you were then expected in London every day. This Letter announced that *Marmion* was on his way to Grasmere; and I fully expected him here to meet me on my return, and have waited from week to week hoping that I might announce his arrival to you. But alas! I have waited in vain: and I now think it high time to apprize you of our disappointment.

Thank you for the interesting particulars about the Nortons;

[1] "Mr. J.," whose name is misspelt by the poet, is our friend the enemy, Jeffrey. He had traduced Scott over *Marmion*; belaboured Southey for his poem *Thalaba*; now it was the turn of Wordsworth. "All the world," said the reviewer of the *Poems* (of 1807), "laughs at Elegiac stanzas to a sucking-pig—a Hymn on Washing-day—Sonnets to one's grandmother—or Pindarics on gooseberry-pye; and yet, we are afraid, it will not be quite easy to convince Mr. Wordsworth that the same ridicule must infallibly attach to most of the pathetic pieces in these volumes." The diction of the Poems, the critic added, "has nowhere any pretension to elegance or dignity." The first sentence which so angered Wordsworth reads: "The author is known to belong to a certain brotherhood of poets, who have haunted for some years about the Lakes of Cumberland; and is generally looked upon, we believe, as the purest model of the excellencies and peculiarities of the school which they have been labouring to establish."—Art. XIV of the "E.R.," No. XXI, Oct. 1807.

I shall like much to see them for their own sakes; but so far from being serviceable to my Poem they would stand in the way of it, as I have followed (as I was in duty bound to do) the traditionary and common historic records. Therefore I shall say in this case, a plague upon your industrious Antiquarianism that has put my fine story to confusion.[1]

I have had a great anxiety since my return home. A complaint has been going about the Country among young Children, and put on such a strange aspect in my eldest Son that for two or three days we were afraid that he had gotten that dreadful and, I am afraid, incurable malady, the water in the Head. Our fears, which were indeed wretched, did, however, God be thanked, prove groundless. The Child is now well, but far from having recovered his fresh looks.

Queer Fishes at Longman's

Southey was in Town at the same time as myself, but out of health, as he always is in the smoke of London. He gave me confident hopes of seeing you, and I was not a little disappointed that you did not come. At Longman's I dined once, and there I met your Friend Heber for the first time: I liked well what I saw of him, and wished to see more.[2] Some curious Fishes were present: Sharon Turner, for example [3]; and, among others, a tag of literature, a drysalter of the name of Hill,[4] a *proprietor* of a periodical publication of which probably you never heard, entitled "The Monthly Mirror," and of the existence of which I should also have been ignorant if a good natured Friend had not told me that I had the honour of being abused in it. The head of the table was illuminated by the sapient countenance of that sun of Literature, Artaxerxes Longimanus, and in opposition were exhibited the milder glories of a sister planet, Rees I believe being the name which he bears among mortals.[5] Upon the whole it was but a dull business, saving that we had some good haranguing, talk I cannot call it, from Coleridge.

A distressing accident took place here during my absence; you perhaps might see a bald account of it in the papers. A poor man and his wife, who had eight Children under sixteen years of age,

[1] In *The White Doe* is embodied the tradition of the family of "Old Norton" (of Norton Conyers, Wath—Yorks), who took part in the Pilgrimage of Grace, and was also one of the rebels of 1569.

[2] *Vide* note, page 23.

[3] A busy solicitor, who wrote the *History of England to the Norman Conquest.*

[4] According to Lucas's *Lamb*, the original of Tom Pry.

[5] Thomas Norton Longman took Owen Rees into partnership. Artaxerxes was humane and benevolent, and greatly beloved by his subjects. The association of his name with that of Longman thus modifies the poet's slighting reference to the publisher's dinner-party.

and who had left six of them at home under the care of a girl of eleven, perished together upon the hills in attempting to return from Langdale, one of the neighbouring valleys, to their home in Grasmere. It is supposed that they had been bewildered by mist and snow, and perished by falling over the rocks. The bodies were found at no great distance from each other, and were buried in one grave in Grasmere Churchyard. This event has excited much compassion, and we have had a subscription for the children by which I hope they will be benefited. The spring has burst out upon us all at once, and the Vale is now in exquisite beauty. A gentle shower has fallen this morning ; and I hear the thrush, who has built in my Orchard, singing amain.

I return to *Marmion* : where do you think he can be detained ? I might have read him in London, but I purposely declined, reserving the pleasure for the tranquillity of the Country. Pray write soon ; and believe me, dear Scott, your sincere Friend,

W. WORDSWORTH.

From the same

GRASMERE,
August 4th, [1808].

MY DEAR SCOTT,—I wrote to you long ago ; and to my great mortification have accidently found my Letter, dated June 20th, lying upon my Study-table, this day. We are here at a distance from the post, and send our Letters off by Parcels ; and this unfortunate one, which I imagine had made one parcel sent off at the time, must have been mislaid.[1] I acknowledged in this letter the receipt of two Scotch Notes of one pound each for our orphans. I have long since paid the money into the hands of the Treasurer, and sincerely thank you and Mrs. Scott for your kindness, the more so because the donation came unasked. I did not apply to you or any friends in Scotland because I know that disasters of this kind often happen in your wild and mountainous Country ; and that therefore the claim would be less felt, and could with less proprietry be urged. You will be happy to hear that we have raised a sum, which, with the liberal help of the Parish, will enable us to give the Children a good education ; and put them in a way of earning a comfortable livelihood.

Scott's generosity

Thank you for *Marmion* which I have read with lively pleasure.

[1] To-day, over a century after the Poet was writing, and in the age of aerial mails and wireless transmission, parcels for post are still placed in holes in walls for collection by the postmen in outlying districts of the Lakes.

I think your end has been attained; that it is not in every respect the end which I should wish you to propose to yourself you will be well aware from what you know of my notions of composition, both as to matter and manner. How Mr. Jeff[rey] has dealt with you I have not seen; nor of course the stupid nonsense which I am told he has written of me. With respect to your Poem I can say that in the circle of my acquaintance it seems as well liked as the *Lay*—though I have heard that in the world it is not so. Had the Poem been much better than the *Lay* it could scarcely have satisfied the Public, which at best has too much of the monster, the moral monster, in its corporation. In the notes you have quoted two lines of mine from memory; and your memory, admirable as it is, has here failed you. The passage stands with you

His verdict on Marmion

The Swans in or on sweet St. Mary's lake.

The proper reading is

The Swan in still St. Mary's lake.

I mention this in order that the erratum may be corrected in a future edition.

Your Letter gave us hope that we might see you here this Summer; it will afford us all great pleasure. We are now in a large House where you might be comfortably accommodated. I had a peep at your edition of Dryden. I had not time to read the Notes which would have interested me most, namely the historical and illustrative ones; but some of the critical introductions I read, and am not surprised at the opinions they contain, but rather surprised at their coming from you, who in your infancy and Childhood must have had so many of the strains of native Poetry resounding in your ears. One passage in one of your notes I was grieved to see: not the language of praise applied to things which according to my feelings do not deserve it, but harsh censure unjustly passed upon a great Man—I mean Hayward the Dramatist.[1] Only read (not to speak of any of his other things) his *Woman Killed with Kindness*! There is an exquisite strain of Pathos in many parts of that play which Dryden not only was utterly incapable

[1] *i.e.*, Thomas Heywood (1575–1650 ?), whose masterpiece *A Woman Kilde with Kindnesse*, which Wordsworth here praises, was produced in 1602, and printed in 1607. Scott's notes in his edition of Dryden, to which his friend here takes exception, included the statements that Heywood's plays "may be examined with advantage by the antiquary, but afford slender amusement to the lovers of poetry"; and that "It is a pity, as Johnson said of Churchill, so fruitful a tree should have borne only crabs." Charles Lamb described Heywood as "a sort of prose Shakespeare," but qualified the high praise by adding, "but we miss *the Poet*."

of producing, but of feeling when produced. The praise which has been given to Otway, Hayward is far better entitled to. He does not indeed write like a Poet, but his scenes are many of them as *pathetic* as any that have been produced since the days of Euripides. My Wife and Sister join in best remembrance to yourself and Mrs. Scott; and believe me,—dear Scott, most truly yours,

W. WORDSWORTH.[1]

Let me repeat how happy we shall be to see you here. Excuse this uncorrected scrawl, written in a great hurry.

[AFTER the foregoing letter there was little correspondence between the two authors until one day in 1825 there arose an argument between Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy as to whether they with Scott—on the latter's visit to the Lakers—called on that Johnsonian figure, Anna Seward, at Lichfield. Dorothy said "Yes"; William retorted "No"; and Scott, being appealed to, cast confusion into Rydal Mount by declaring that he never went to Lichfield with them at all! The friendly dispute became amusingly serious; and here we have the poet and his sister joining in one letter finally to lay their cases before the arbitrator. What the three of them could not agree upon, the editor of a century later can hardly decide. Not that it matters. The interest of the joint document is in its personal glimpses:]

Confusion in Rydal Mount

From Dorothy Wordsworth

RYDAL MOUNT, NEAR KENDAL,
June 13th, 1825.

MY DEAR SIR WALTER,—Accept my best thanks for your speedy reply to my questions.[2] On that score my pleasure was great on breaking the seal of your letter, and in reading it I was truly gratified by your kindness towards us, the inmates of Rydal Mount, and by your interesting communications respecting yourself and Family. Yet we should have been better pleased had you held out hopes that your travels this summer might have led you into Westmorland. Should you, on your return from Dublin, land at Liverpool, this might be; but one can hardly hope you will choose that route, the Steam-boats of Glasgow bringing you so near home. We had heard of your Son's marriage [*i.e.*, Major Walter Scott]; and, but a few days after you had told us of your intention of going

[1] In Knight's *Life* of Wordsworth (3 vols., 1889) it is noted that this letter is quoted, very imperfectly, by Lockhart. It is also incompletely quoted by Knight.

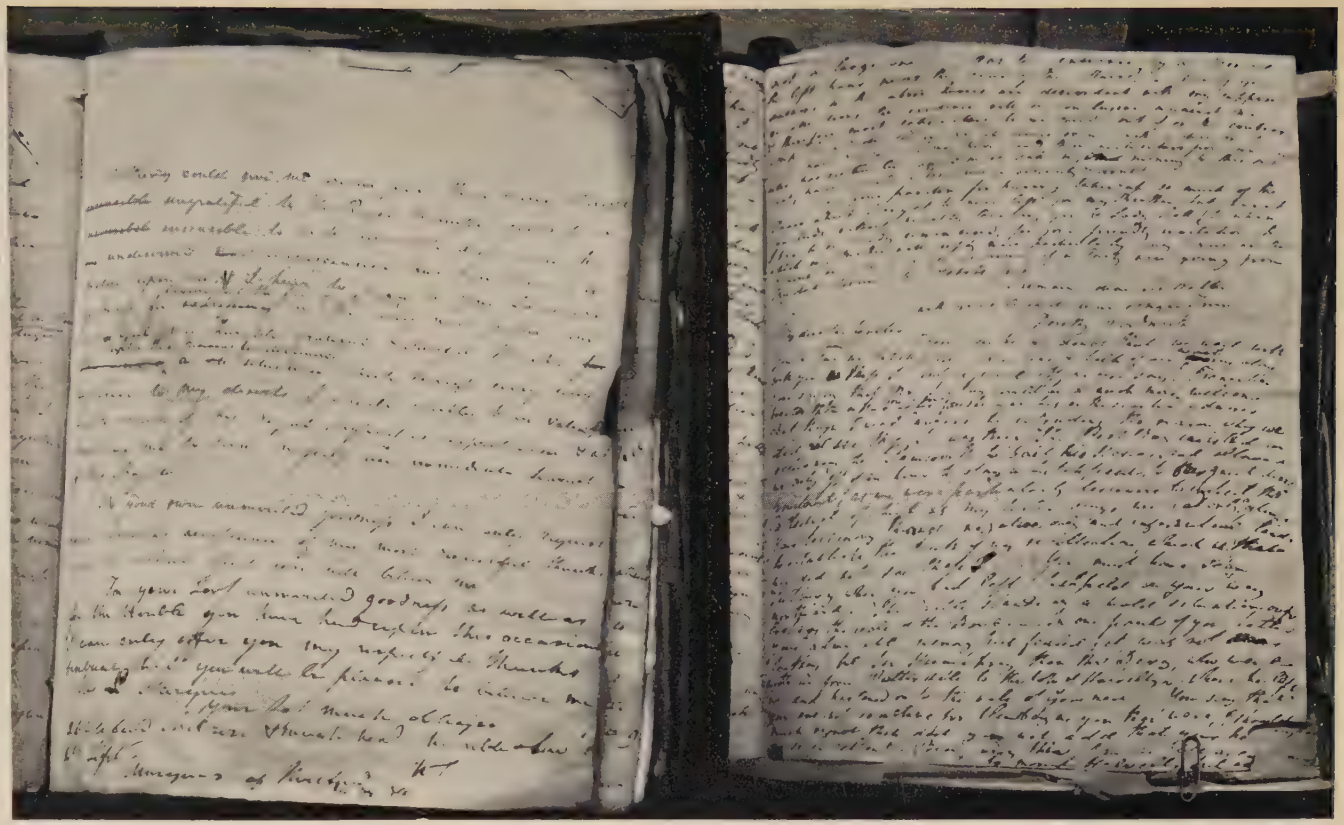
[2] As indicated, when the "dispute" first arose Dorothy wrote briefly to Scott for his recollection. It was Scott's startling reply—agreeing with William that the Wordsworths did not call upon Anna Seward and that, as a matter of fact, he had no recollection of being in their company at Lichfield—that drew these two letters from the brother and sister. Both Dorothy and Scott had usually accurate memories.

to see him, we had the pleasure of meeting with a record in the newspapers of his gallantry and courage in saving the Life of an individual at the risque of his own. *Him* I saw a Boy in petticoats at Liswayde. For the sake of that remembrance I was the more gratified by this honorable mention of the young man, your Son, though, perhaps, when you hear the whole history of the Seward Dispute you will say I have little cause to rely upon my memory as a helper to present gratifications.

Dorothy describes Anna Seward

And now to the point. A few days before I wrote to you, in conversation with my Brother I chanced to say: "When you and I saw Miss Seward at Lichfield"—nothing doubting; when he exclaimed—"Saw Miss Seward! I *never* saw her!" Observe Mrs. Wordsworth was present, and she declared that the impression on her mind was that we *had* called on Miss S. with you. As for myself, never did I seem to recollect any thing more distinctly, except the subject of conversation, which, as the visit was short, could hardly have been important: the room in which we sat—upstairs—not a large room; Miss Seward's appearance—rather a short woman when I had expected to meet a tall one; disappointed in her beauty—for I had gone with that foolish forgetfulness that Ladies whom we hear spoken of as very handsome do not remain the same during their whole lives; her manners lively—but not extravagently complimentary, as I had expected they would be; her dress—I *think* a white Gown—certainly a small black Bonnet. We were mortified that our visit was so short: had not time to enter the Cathedral—looked in at the West door, which I think was fastened within by a little Gate, otherwise we should not have seen up the Centre to the painted window or would certainly have gone forward. The whole appearance of the Building struck me much, and this is all I recollect—except wall-flowers growing on the old walls in the town—and a general pleasing effect of antiquity. Your letter finds me with these impressions fixed on the mind, yet my Brother's testimony—so different, and yet so clear—at times made me fancy the whole (as far as relates to the *interview* with Miss Seward) but a dream—made up of some real dream and of reports and descriptions concerning that celebrated Lady. I now try to believe it so, and so it must be. Yet the conclusion is mortifying, and will principally tend to make me doubt my internal testimony respecting past events connected with external objects.

I wish your recollections had been more distinct. We certainly



TWO VOLUMES OF SIR WALTER SCOTT'S LETTER-BOOKS OVERLAPPING

The page on the left hand is the end of the draft letter from Scott declining the Prince Regent's offer to him of the Laureateship. The page on the right is the conclusion of a letter from Dorothy Wordsworth to Scott; and, underneath, the beginning of her brother's letter. The poet and his sister are here writing to Sir Walter asking him to decide an amusing dispute between themselves whether they, when on a holiday with Scott, visited Anna Seward, "The Swan of Lichfield."

did go on to Lichfield—as my Brother will convince you. There are yet one or two questions which I must put to you. Was Miss Seward accustomed to sit in an upstairs Room? Was the Room not a large one? Was the entrance by a Door at the left hand near the head of the stairs? Now if your answers to the above Queries are discordant with my supposed recollections, the evidence will be conclusive against me, and *therefore* most satisfactory to my mind; but on the contrary, Miss Seward *did* sit in an upstairs room—with a door on the left hand, &c., &c. I may have heard these particulars from some one who has visited her, and I must still be turning to this subject, haunted with a troublesome obscurity and doubt.

I beg your pardon for having taken up so much of the Paper, which I ought to have left for my Brother; but cannot conclude without heartily thanking you and Lady Scott (to whom I beg to be kindly remembered) for your friendly invitation to which my Brother will reply particularly. Only I must add that I should be loth to be left at home if a Party were going from Rydal Mount to Abbotsford.—I remain, dear Sir Walter, with great Respect, your obliged Friend,

DOROTHY WORDSWORTH.

[THE remainder of the combined letter-sheets is occupied by William Wordsworth as follows:]

From William Wordsworth

MY DEAR SIR WALTER,—There can be no doubt that we went with you as far as Litchfield. There was a talk of our waiting along with you on Miss S.; but it went off, as you say. I remember your saying that Mr. Southey would be a much more welcome visitor than either you or me, for she was his enthusiastic admirer. But though I was averse to intruding, the reason why we did not see Miss S. was this: The Post Boy insisted on returning to Tamworth to bait his Horses, and allowed us only ¼ of an hour to stay in Litchfield, to our great disappointment, as we were particularly desirous to inspect the Cathedral, of which, as my Sister says, we had only a glimpse. Your testimony, though negative only—and inferential—tends to establish the truth of my recollection, which is that we did not see Miss S. You must have seen Tutbury when you had left Lichfield, on your way Northward. The Castle stands on a bold situation overlooking the vale of the Dove. In one point of your letter your admirable memory has failed: it was not Southey,

William's case

but Sir Humphrey, then Mr. Davy, who went with us from Patterdale to the top of Helvellyn, where he left us and hastened on to the vale of Grasmere.

You say that you are not so active for Climbing as you then were. I should much regret this did you not add that your health is so excellent. Being very thin I am able as ever to mount Helvellyn,[1] but in many things I am admonished of the *Non sum qualis eram*, particularly my eyes. I do not require spectacles except for maps, my sight not being worn as most people of my age find them; but the organ with me is very irritable, and hot rooms, candlelight, and much reading I cannot bear. May you be blest, like your good mother, with power to read as late in life as she could. Thanks for your invitation to my children, who will be proud at some time or other to avail themselves of it. I have but three: one at Oxford; a girl, *now*, I ought to say a woman, at home; and a Boy who was some years at the Charterhouse where his health failed, and is now with me preparing for Oxford. Though you overlook my invitation to West[morla]nd which would shew you Southey also, I live in hope of seeing you one day at your own abode of which I have heard much. Most distinctly do I recollect it and the then state of the grounds, as shewn by your delightful daughter, now Mrs. Lockhart; in particular the filial pride with which she conducted me to a well, decorated with architectural Fragments from Melrose.

The Poet and his family

With kind remembrances to Lady Scott, in which Mrs. W. unites,—I remain, my dear Sir Walter, most cordially your Friend,

W. Wordsworth.

Robert Southey (1774–1843)

Although Robert Southey appears here in some new pages, his Correspondence has been too well gathered for surprises. He also was happily married—"an animated agreeable man, with a certain degree of the Beau in his appearance," Joanna Baillie describes him, after a tea-drinking with him and his wife in his library. He was living high on his Keswick hill, in dreams not less magnificent than the vision from his window. It was all fairly well to grind out well-paid reviews so long as he could weave interminable poems at sweated rates. The poems were for posterity; and if his Laureateship could not insure the success of the bequest, it meant a little less slavery to the Quarterly Editors. Alas! posterity does not read much his 6,000-lined poems—it does not read half as much poetry as it talks about. It esteems his *Life* of Nelson, which he originally threw off as a pot-boiler; and it places his letters,

[1] Wordsworth was 55 years of age at this time, and lived another 25 years.

written so naturally and readily to friends or deserving strangers like Charlotte Brontë, among the best in English literature. These to Scott are typical of him, especially the one about the Laureateship, and that other in which he visualises some meetings of Immortals in the Shades. What, one wonders, was the greeting given him there by Byron, who wrote that bitter *Don Juan* Dedication to him—

> . . . You, Bob! are rather insolent, you know,
> At being disappointed in your wish
> To supersede all warblers here below,
> And be the only Blackbird in the dish. . .

Perhaps Byron hailed him with a more truthful sonnet to his prose, which on earth he acknowledged as perfect. No matter! Time has not done too much wrong to dear plodding Southey.

From Robert Southey

KESWICK,
October 4, 1807.

My Dear Scott,—*Queen Orraca* is on her way to you, but taking a very roundabout road for the sake of a frank. I thank you for spreading her fame, and marvel at your marvellous memory.[1]

I thank you also for what you say concerning Constable. It is certain that no man who gets any credit at all by his writings can get less money by them than I do, but in this it must be the book-buying and not the book-selling animal that is in fault. It does not seem probable that Constable can have more means of pushing a book than our Fathers which are in the Row have,[2] and unless he could make more by me than they do, I could not make more by him. The truth is that all my books, except those early works of which the copyright is gone, sell badly. I sold to Longman the first edition of *Thalaba* (of 1,000 copies) for 115*£*.[3] This was seven years ago, and between two and three hundred are still upon hand. I let him print *Madoc* upon terms no better than they grant to an untried author, that of sharing the eventual profits: in the course of two years my share has been five and twenty pounds. Half my time is employed in writing reviewals for the "Annual," translating romances, and such sort of unworthy work, to eke out a very scanty income. Assuredly I could in that quantity of time which is thus employed every year produce such a poem as *Thalaba*, but seven hundred copies would be seven years in selling. Were

Profits from poetry

[1] He is sending either a MS. copy or a proof of his ballad, which Scott quoted from memory for the Princess of Wales to secure her interest.

[2] *i.e.*, the publishers of Paternoster Row. Scott had written to Southey: "I do not think Wordsworth and you understand the book-selling animal well enough, and wish you would one day try Constable who would give any terms for a connexion with you."

[3] Which would probably include (according to custom) the cost of printing, leaving a beggarly sum for the poet.

my income sufficient this would signify nothing. I should do it for pleasure, be perfectly satisfied with the fame I get, and care nothing for profit. There is no hardship in this sacrifice of half my time, any profession would require as much or more, and tho' any profession would be far more lucrative, as long as I have enough I am contented, and more than contented.

His philosophy

You may see by this statement that Constable over-rates the utility of a connection with me, which must be of more consequence to Longman than it could be to him, because I bear so large a part in the "Annual Review." I have, however, about a thousand lines by me of a poem called *The Curse of Kehàma*, of which Hindoo superstition is the basis, as the Mohammedan faith was the basis of *Thalaba*. It is written like *Thalaba*, with this difference that there is a frequent intermixture of rhymes, my design being to buoy up by rhyme those parts in which there was least passion. If compleated it would extend to the same length, that is about 6000 lines, with about the same proportion of notes. What would he give me for an edition of this poem were I to finish it, the form and number of the edition being of course at his option ? If his offer tempted me to proceed, I would communicate it to Longman (to whom I should consider myself so far bound), and give him the refusal of it at that price. On his refusal it should be Constable's. I had formed an intention of going thro' all the most remarkable mythologies, and building up a romance upon each ; and had conceived the stories and collected materials for most of them.

If the romance you mention be the old *Poema del Cid* edited by Sanchez (as I suppose it to be) I have it, and have made great use of it.[1] This you would perhaps have the goodness to enquire for me. There are two books which I should be very glad to meet with, and which possibly Mr. Frere may possess ; the *Libro de los Quarenta Cantos* by Alonso de Fuentes, and a poem called *Los Famosos Nechos del Cid* by Diego Ximenez de Aillon. I should much like to see his translation, of which both my brother and Lady Holland have said much to me. What I have done with the poem has been to weave into the Chronicle all the additional circumstances of picture and costume which are to be found in it. This is perfectly justifiable, for the poem is unquestionably the elder, and is in great part the obvious source of the Chronicle. My ballads may fitly appear in the appendix at your suggestion.

[1] Scott had offered to secure a copy owned by Mr. John Frere, part of whose translation of it Southey afterwards appended to his *Chronicles of the Cid*.

Wordsworth is at Grasmere, and has been there for some months. The defects of his last volumes seem to be more felt than their beauties. I hear many persons speak of the few foolish pieces there with dislike, and scarcely any body with admiration of the sonnets, which are in the very highest strain of poetry. He is probably compleating his *Recluse*. I am labouring upon the History of Brazil and Paraguey, which will be ready to go into the press by the time *The Cid* comes out of it. Should the court of Portugal remove to that fine country, as it is to be wished it may, this work will excite a great temporary interest. My manuscript materials are very extensive and very valuable.

Henry is in Portugal.[1] Mrs. Southey joins me in respects to Mrs. Scott.—Yours very truly,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

From the same

KESWICK,
2 October, 1809.

MY DEAR SCOTT,—Before I had leisure to thank you for your own letter and for Ellis's, and for all that there is therein, a new game of Puss-catch-corner has been commenced at Westminster, and Canning has done the most foolish thing he ever did in his life.[2] He should have remembered that Ld. Castlereagh was an Irishman, and that as the Union abolished the Irish Parliament, so ought the ill-customs of that Parliament, duelling being one, to have been abolished with it ; that holding his rank and station in the country, it was as much a breach of decency in him to accept a challenge as it would have been in an Archbishop ; and that he might have done more by his example towards checking a mischievous and absurd practise than has ever been done yet. He got much credit by replying to the Russian Manifesto, and he would have got more by a proper reply to Castlereagh. A single combat had some sense in it—there you relied upon your own heart and hand ; there was some pleasure in hewing and thrusting, and the bravest came off best ; but as for our duels—all that has been said against villainous gunpowder holds true against them.

On duelling

I wish to see Marquis Wellesley in power because we want an enterprising Minister, one who would make the enemy feel the

[1] Southey's younger brother, who became physician to George IV, and also Queen Adelaide.

[2] *i.e.*, his duel with Castlereagh. Canning, at the second fire, was severely wounded in the thigh, and his antagonist had a button of his coat shot off.

mighty power of Great Britain, and not waste our force so pityfully as it has always hitherto been wasted. I wish to see him in power, because he has not been tried, and all the other performers upon the Westminster stage have. But I confess there is but little hope in my wishes.[1] It appears to me that the very constitution of our Cabinet necessarily produce indecision, half-measures, and imbecillity: it seems to me that a Government so constituted is just like an army all whose operations are guided by a Council of War instead of a General. I am for Ministerial Dictatorships.

Ballantyne has my first Chapter by this time.[2] He will think me a political Ishmaelite and no respector of persons. It would have been better had I had plenty of time for forethought, and for arranging and rearranging the parts. Such as it is, however, it is not likely to be thought dull, and tho' it will offend all parties in turn, yet I think its downright sincerity, manifest impartiality, and right English feeling will bear it thro', and answer his purpose, better than any thing more cautious and common-place. It must be remembered that the various parties are spoken of according as they deserved at the beginning of that year; in its progress the Ministry deserves better language, and all branches of the Opposition worse, especially Sir Francis Burdett,[3] whose utter want of sympathy with the Spaniards has done him more injury in my estimation than any part of his former conduct. Oh! that we could but weed out the cursed spirit of party from this country, and make our politicians ashamed of any other denomination than that of Briton's!

The party spirit

What you say about Bona[parte] weighs so much with me that I wish I had heard it sooner. Your views about the *Morte d'Arthur* are wiser ones than mine; and I do most formally and willingly resign it into your hands.[4] My interest was that the book should be read, but people are not disposed to read such things generally, or the *Cid* would not hang upon hand. Now a very limited edition is sure to find purchasers, and nothing need be sacrificed to ensure its success. I was not, by the bye, aware that the book had been

[1] The Marquis Wellesley in 1812 failed to form a Coalition Ministry, as requested by the Prince Regent.

[2] Probably refers to his long contribution on the "State of Affairs in England, etc.," in the "Edin. Annual Register," vol. i for 1808, but not issued until 1810.

[3] Who had opposed the War with France; and was denouncing corruption in Parliament.

[4] Scott had a "distant vision" (unfortunately never realised by him) of reprinting the whole of the *Morte d'Arthur* from "the only original Caxton which is extant, with all the superstition and harlotrie which the castrator in the reign of Edward VI. chose to omit."

reformed by the Godly Critics whose worthy descendants have lately set forth a Family Shakespere,[1] and will it is to be hoped in due time present us with an Edition Expurgate of the Bible and upon the plan proposed by Matthew Lewis. Oh! I have a bill of indictment against those Eclectics and Vice-Society men whenever Murray will send me the needful documents, for be it known to you, that in one of the Eclectic Reviews there is a grand passage describing the *Soul of Shakespere in Hell.* If I do not put some of those curst Pharisees into Purgatory for this, for the edification of our "Quarterly" readers—then may my right hand forget its cunning.

Vice-Society men

I have not seen the last ["Quarterly] Review," which makes me suppose that Murray is still on his journey. Your "Register" will monopolise me for the next three months, unless I can steal time, by way of refreshing myself, for some light article. These Quarterly Reviews lose much by giving up all those minor publications which served to play shuttlecock with, and were put to death with a pun, or served up in the sauce of their own humourous absurdity. Hence, too, they are less valuable as materials for the history of literature. The old Annuals was the best plan, if it had not been starved by scanty pay, and moreover choked with divinity.

My next Missionary article, when I have time to write it, will be singularly curious. It will relate to South Africa, and I shall obtain from my Uncle a manuscript of D'Anville's concerning the Portuguese possessions there, and his plan for establishing a communication by land between them.

I want to hear that you have conceived of another poem and are parturient.[2] For myself I shall begin with Pelayo the Spaniard, as soon as I can make up my mind in what metre to write it. That of *Kehama,* tho' in rhyme, is almost as much my own as *Thalaba*; and will, I dare say, excite as much censure.—Yours very truly,

R. SOUTHEY.*

From the same

LONDON,
November 5th, 1813.

MY DEAR SCOTT,—If you have not guessed at the reason why your letter has lain ten weeks unanswered, you must have thought me a very thankless and graceless fellow, and very undeserving of

[1] Bowdler's *Shakespeare,* first edn., 1807.

[2] When the Rev. Cuthbert Southey printed parts of the foregoing letter in his edition of his father's Correspondence, this sentence was mangled to read: "I want to hear that you have planned another poem and commenced it"—this after his father's "bill of indictment" against Godly Critics.

such a letter. I waited from day to day that I might tell you all was compleated, and my patience was nearly exhausted in the process. Let me tell you the whole history in due order, before I express my feelings toward you upon the occasion. Upon receiving yours, I wrote to Croker [1] saying that the time was past when I cou'd write verses upon demand, but that if it were understood that instead of the old formalities I might be at liberty to write upon great public events, or to be silent, as the spirit moved —in that case the office would become a mark of honourable distinction ; and I should be proud of accepting it. How this was to be managed he best knew : for, of course, it was not for me to propose terms to the Prince. When next I saw him he told me that after the appointment was compleated, he or some other person in the Prince's confidence would suggest to him the fitness of making this reform in an office, which requires some reform to rescue it from the contempt into which it had fallen. I thought all was settled, and expected every day to receive some official communication, but week after week passed on. My head-quarters at this time were at Streetham. Going one day into town to my brother's, I found that Lord Wm. Gordon, with whom I had left a card on my first arrival, had called three times on me in as many days, and had that morning requested that I would call on him at eleven, twelve, one or two o'clock. I went accordingly, never dreaming of what the business could be, and wondering at it. He told me that the Marquis of Hertford was his brother-in-law, and had written to him as being my neighbour in the country—placing in fact the appointment at his (Lord Wm's) disposal. Wherefore he wished to see me to know if I wished to have it. The meaning of all this was easily seen. I was very willing to thank one person more, and especially a good-natured man to whom I am indebted for many neighbourly civilities. He assured me that I should now soon hear from the Chamberlain's Office, and I departed accordingly in full expectation that two or three days more would settle the affair. But neither days nor weeks brought any further intelligence, and if plenty of employment and avocations had not filled up my mind as well as my time, I should perhaps have taken dudgeon and returned to my family and pursuits from which I had so long been absent.

Laureateship conditions

At length after sundry ineffectual attempts, owing sometimes

[1] John Wilson Croker, the politician and essayist, and " Quarterly Reviewer " responsible for the outrageous criticism of Keats (see pages 58 & 59). Introduced the term " Conservatives." The original of Rigby in *Coningsby*.

to his absence, and once or twice to public business, I saw Croker once more, and he discovered for me that the delay originated in a desire of Lord Hertford's that Lord Liverpool should write to him, and ask the office for me. This calling-in the Prime Minister about the disposal of an office the net emoluments of which are about 90£ a year, reminded me of the old proverb about shearing pigs. Lord Liverpool, however, was informed of this by Croker, the letter was written, and in the course of another week Lord Hertford wrote to Croker that he would give orders for making out the appointment : a letter soon followed to say that the order was given, and that I might be sworn in whenever I pleased. My pleasure, however, was the last thing to be consulted. After due enquiry on my part and some additional delay, I received a note to say that if I could attend at the Chamberlain's Office, at one o'clock on Thursday Nov. 4, a Gentleman Usher would be there to administer the oath. Now it so happened that I was engaged to go to Woburn on the Tuesday, meaning to return on Thursday to dinner, or remain a day longer as I might feel disposed. Down I went to the office, and solicited a change in the day. But this was in vain. The Gentleman Usher had been spoken to, and a Poet Lauriat is a creature of a lower description. I obtained, however, two hours grace, and yesterday by rising at candle-light and hurrying the post-boys, reached the office to the minute. I swore to be a faithful servant of the King, to reveal all treasons that might come to my knowledge, to discharge the duties of my office, and to obey the Lord Chamberlain in all matters of the King's service, and in his stead the Vice Chamberlain. God is henceforth to help me as I observe all this.[1] Having taken this upon my soul I was thereby inducted into all the rights, privileges, and benefits which Henry James Pye did enjoy or ought to have enjoyed.

The original salary of the office was 100 marks : it was raised for Ben Jonson to 100 pounds and a tierce of Spanish Canary Wine, now wickedly commuted for 26£, which said sum, unlike the Canary, is subject to income-tax, land-tax, and Heaven knows what taxes beside. The whole net income is little more or less than 90£. It comes to me as a God-send ; and I have vested it in a life-policy : by making it up to 102£ it covers an insurance for 3,000£ upon my life. I have never felt any painful anxiety as to providing

Wine wickedly commuted

[1] This sentence beginning " God is henceforth " was suppressed by the Rev. Cuthbert Southey.

for my family—my mind is too buoyant, my animal spirits too good, for this care ever to have affected my happiness, and I may add that a not unbecoming trust in Providence has ever supported my confidence in myself. But it is with the deepest feeling of thankfulness that I have secured this legacy for my wife and children, and it is to you that I am primarily and chiefly indebted for this.

To the manner of your letter I am quite unable to reply. We shall both be remembered hereafter, and ill betide him who shall institute a comparison between us. There has been no race: We have both got to the top of the hill by different paths, and meet there not as rivals but as friends, each rejoicing in the success of the other.

Both at the top

I wait for the Levee, and hope to find a place in the Mail for Penrith on the evening after it—for I have the Swiss malady, and am home-sick. Remember me to Mrs. Scott and your Daughter, and believe me, my dear Scott.—Most truly and affectionately yours,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.*

From the same

KESWICK,
8 July, 1824.

MY DEAR SCOTT,—Mrs. Hughes owed me some reparation for sending me last week an account of Elmsley's death, which, thank God, has proved to be untrue, and there are hopes of his recovery.[1] She has made good amends for this needless sorrow (a heavy one the loss of Elmsley would be!) by the real pleasure which it has given me to hear from you. The last letter which I received was written just after Ticknor left you, early in 1819: and the last which I wrote was addrest to you in London to offer a very hearty congratulation upon the honorary addition to your name.[2] But I hate accounts of every kind, so if two or three books of mine since that time have not found their way to you—as they ought to have done according to my directions—*requiescant in pace.*

It was a mortification to me that I did not see you during my Scotch tour five years ago. But I past thro' Selkirk at midnight in the mail, to join a party at Edinburgh, whom I brought home with me by the Glasgow road. I saw a great deal of Scotland

[1] We have seen Lockhart foretelling that this cheerful busybody would do poor dying Terry's business for him. Her victim here is Dr. Peter Elmsley, the classical scholar.

[2] *i.e.*, Scott's Baronetcy.

during that journey, and was so interested with what I saw, that I live in hopes of one day seeing the rest. I had resolution enough to keep a minute journal, which may probably see the light when the booksellers come to pick my bones and make their last meal of me. It was worth doing, for Telford was one of my companions,[1] so that I saw his piers, his roads, and the Caledonial Canal in process, and had all the information which I could desire concerning them, and the localities every where.

Wordsworth, who is almost always on the move, has lately returned from the South. How he is employed I know not, not having seen him since my own return in February last: but we shall probably see another crop of Odes and Sonnets in due season, for the older he grows, the more prolific he becomes. My springs are not dry, but they have ceased to flow. You remember poor Daniel's complaint in his old age:

> Time has done to me this wrong,
> To make me write too much, and live too long.[2]

Time has brought no such injury to me as yet, but it has made me much more willing to learn than to teach, and the eagerness with which I pursue my researches is much greater than the inclination which I feel for composing their results. Were it not that this also is a mode of learning (and sometimes the best) I should find composition but an irksome task. At present I am printing the second volume of the [*History of the*] *Peninsular War*, and making collections for a longer series of historical works than I shall live to finish. As a proof, however, that my right hand hath not quite forgotten its cunning, I will send you an Ode written upon the occasion of the King's visit to your country—one of my annual tasks, and yet written with goodwill.[3] It must travel to London for a frank I will send it, because it expresses a friendly as well as a British feeling.

His researches

It would give me great pleasure if I could accept your hospitable invitation. There are few things which I should like so well, but we are looking for a succession of guests who will engage us till the Autumn is advanced; and what with indisposition, which always lays me up at this time of the year (this year more severely

[1] The great engineer, who constructed the Caledonian Canal, and opened up Northern Scotland by 920 miles of new roads and 120 bridges. The "booksellers picked his bones" so long after as 1929, when the journal of this tour was published.

[2] This lament, which many authors other than Samuel Daniel (1562–1619) might have written, is here misquoted by Southey, the original reading "But years hath done this wrong," etc. (Philotas, Dedn. L. 106).

[3] As Poet Laureate.

than usual), and engagements of society and excercise which follow, I find myself very much the slave of the desk during the other months. Mrs. S. unites with me in kindest respects to Lady Scott. —Believe me, Dear Sir Walter, yours most truly,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

From the same

KESWICK,
9 July, 1831.

MY DEAR SCOTT,—There is but one evil attendant on the course of constant employment in which my life passes, and that is that it leaves me so very little time for correspondence, of which little too the larger portion is taken up by strangers, forcing upon me matters in which I have neither pleasure nor concern. This must be your lot as well as mine. Were I less occupied I should neither let such long intervals elapse without enquiring of you from yourself, nor live so near the Border without having a more lively knowledge [of] Abbotsford than prints can give me.

Britain in her greatest danger

But it is of all blessings the greatest to be contented with one's lot. My way of life agrees as well with my health as with my inclinations; and even in these evil times my spirits are not depressed below their wonted pitch. That this country is in much greater danger than it has ever been since the meeting of the Long Parliament, is most certain; but I have nevertheless an unshaken confidence that Providence will make a way for us thro' all our dangers. All farther revolutions in France will be to our favour, and so will war, to which such revolution in necessary consequence must lead; and then I promise myself another bonfire on the summit of Skiddaw for another battle of Waterloo. Here at home those that have anything to lose must erelong open their eyes to the danger of that spoliation which is openly threatened. An Irish rebellion may awaken them: so may the renewal of the incendiary system which, notwithstanding Lord Althorpe's assertion in Parliament, *is* renewed.

I had a curious letter from the Lord Brougham and Vaux, written when he was so young in his title that he signed himself Brougham.[1] It was to ask my opinion whether literature could be benefited by any direct encouragement from Government, and if so in what manner that encouragement might best be given. There was a little odour of the rat-catcher about the letter,—to

[1] The Lord Chancellor. He founded London University; and is honoured for his educational work and his part in the abolition of slavery.

which, however, I replied with due courtesy, telling him in what manner Government might serve itself by encouraging literature, but telling him also that the present Ministry had something else to think of and to do; for they had raised the Devil and were now in a situation which made it their business to lay him if they could. He spoke of the Guelphic Order, upon which I desired to remain a Ghibelline. But my letter was written in perfect good humour as well as frankness; and pestilent statesman as he is, he is far too good natured a man, as well as too able a one, to be offended by it.[1] There the correspondence ended. Brougham is so much the slave of immediate impulse that no one can speculate with any confidence upon his conduct. If he puts himself at the head of a revolution, it will be more from vanity than inclination, and more from fear than either. If he acts in conformity to his own real opinion and his own interest, he will keep his place by joining in that sort of Coalition, under Peel, by which, I suppose, the Reform Bill will finally be carried in some modified form—mischievous enough however it be modified. What the end may be, God knows: as an old man at Grasmere said "We's never live to see't: but we's maybe hear tell!" Methinks it will be one of the pleasures of the next world, in some of our first stages there, to fall in with a good arrival from this. What a pleasant meeting shall you and I have with Chaucer and others of the venerable antient song-enditers! Dryden and Swift will be looking out for you; and I shall be enquiring for John Wesley, Archbishop Laud, Vasco Lobeira, and the Venerable Bede.[2]

Straight talk to a minister

By the bye what a strange book poor Anastasius Hope left [behind] him and what strange persons must his representatives [have been to] have published! His death was accelerated, if not wholly occasioned, by the restless thought which he bestowed upon these wild speculations.

I am busy upon the concluding volume of the *Peninsular War*, which will be ready, if I live and do well, for publication in November. And I have another series of Colloquies in the Press, upon the Vulgar Errors of this age, but with a flesh and blood (and actual) collocutor. As soon as both these works are off my hands,

[1] Southey's plan was an annual state grant of £10,000 for ten senior appointments at £500 a year, and twenty-five junior posts at £200 for men of letters dependent upon precarious earnings from literature, and to prevent their becoming pamphleteers and journalists in hostility to established order. It was a method likely to breed a population of critics. More practical was his appeal for copyright reform. Brougham's letter and the reply appear in Southey's *Life*.

[2] All subjects of the industrious pens of Scott and Southey.

I shall begin to print the *History of Portugal* for it would grieve me sorely to think that this work, for which above all others I am thoroughly qualified, should be left incompleat.

Let me hear from you, when you can spare an hour for such employment. Remember me most kindly to Lockhart, if he be with you, and tell him I have begun the paper upon the levelling system. Will you give me your name for a little volume of verses by a poor Devonshire girl which Mrs. Bray (the widow of poor Charles Stothard) is publishing by subscription? Both the girl's character and her family history are so remarkable, that I expect to make from them a choice little paper for the Q.R.[1]

God bless you, my dear Sir Walter.

Yrs. affectionately,

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

JAMES HOGG (1770–1835)

THE letters of the self-taught Ettrick Shepherd are the most revealing of all, and the narrowest in interest. Unlike his brother poets, he did not make an early, happy marriage. Boon companions of the bottle, and housekeepers—such as the very pretty girl, afterwards exchanged for the most ugly dirty goblin ever beheld (a fearful contrast, says John Morrison)—did not help towards that tranquillity of life which favoured the other bards of this group. There is a typical railing at Fate here when he is congratulating Scott on the birth of a second son: "It is a d——d thing that no body has ever to congratulate me on any thing only that *such a thing might have been waur.*" But in truth the world's approbation was given to him rather more generously and promptly than to some of his greater contemporaries, although so far as wee Gilnockies were concerned he had to wait until after he was fifty years of age—when he married his Margaret, eventually settling down in the little farm long begged and given to him by the Duke of Buccleuch. Meantime his letters to Scott are one long grumbling appeal, amusing for that *naïveté* which sometimes becomes startling rudeness.[2] His was not the philosophy to be indifferent to the present or to be content with the reward of posterity. What he most wanted was something substantial down on account of genius. Scott, patient and sympathetic, did his best; but the account was continually running against genius—as it often does. The irony of it all is that between his carousals and his failures he was always craving and striving to be something other than that which Nature made him. Anything would do—farmer, soldier, or even

[1] She was Mary Maria Colling, daughter of a husbandman; and her book, *Fables and other Pieces in Verse* (Longman, 1831). The *Autobiography* of Mrs. Bray contains a great deal about her. Southey's 23-page review is nearly all quotation, ending with the hint that indulgence in the arts keeps the lower orders out of mischief!

[2] Sir Walter's unfailing and helpful letters in reply were not even preserved by the Shepherd, to the regret of the biographers of both.

excise-man, that grave of the Capulets for Scottish geniuses, as Sir Walter described it knowing him so well and remembering Rabbie Burns and Adam Smith. Whereas he figures best in the simple dignity and picturesque character of the Ettrick Shepherd, alone with his flocks, composing those pastorals like " The Skylark " and " Kilmeny " whose exquisite beauty shines like the dewy pearls on his mountain flowers.

From James Hogg

MITCHEL-SLACKS,
2nd July, 1805.

DEAR SIR,—Had I had the least thing of importance to communicate I would have written long ere now, but even now I have nothing to say but only tell you that it is the case, namely, that I have nothing. I am settled with a master who, though void of any taste as to literary things, is nevertheless a good worthy man and a man possessed of every amiable qualification. But my flocks take up the whole of my attention, so that I have not a moment to think of my favourite studies, neither have I any convenience farther than writing on my knee upon the hill—so that my poetical effusions, as well as everything else of that nature, are at an end for sometime. I am not unhappy, far from it; but I am somewhat vexed—not for being obliged to toil hard a whole year for such a small pittance, but for the sake of that same small pittance to be obliged to forego all my favourite studies, the more so as I have been long convinced that if ever I rise above or even to a mediocrity it is to be by my writings.[1]

The Shepherd's ambition

I hope soon to have the pleasure of hearing from you when I am expecting news of an hundred things. I have written twice to Mr. Constable, but he takes no heed of my letters, neither will he send me the Magazine, though I have wrote repeatedly and ordered it to be called for. Pray, dear Sir, would you be so good as to thresh his skin I would be a jill in your debt. I wished to hear from him concerning the ballads, &c., which I termed *The Mountain Bard*,[2] but he sent me no answer. I would have sent copies of the first three or four to you; but as I had no assurance of their being immediately set about, they may grow better lying by me, as I may at least add some notes. Indeed you must write and inform me of this, for I understand Constable is like the fool at herding cows—he is *below it*. Tell me also if you have heard any more from Luskintyre, and if Colin Mackenzie hath made

[1] The Shepherd, now 36 years old, had attracted attention by his early verse " Donald MacDonald " (1800) and *Scottish Pastorals* (1801), and contributions to Scott's *Border Minstrelsy*.

[2] His best known and most successful work, but not published until 1807.

his report to the Society concerning my letters.[1] I am afraid they will stick where they are until I loose them myself. I had a thought of taking a small farm from the Earl of Hoptoun that I may get a resting place for the sole of my foot, but you must be my surety else I may lose it. I will be very happy at hearing from you immediately. Direct to me at *Mitchel-Slacks, by Thornhill, care of* R. Mundel Esq.—I am, dear Scott, your most obed't and obliged,

JAMES HOGG.

From the same

MITCHEL-SLACKS,
March 17, 1806.

DEAR SIR,—As I understand you are now arrived, I must congratulate you on the success of your prospects at London and on the large accession to your annual income which must necessarily accrue to you from thence. It is peculiarly pleasing to me to observe that advancement in fortune does not make you forget your poor friends, but that even in the very height of your glory —when in the midst of these great men who make the speeches which we have in the papers—and that when even in the company of the first blood of the nation you took that opportunity to advance the poetical character of your friend.[2] I fear my thoughts would have been otherwise employed. I must likewise congratulate you on the acquisition of another wee Gilnockie since I wrote last. I wish he may live and turn out a good clever callan to you.[3] It is a d——d thing that no body has ever to congratulate me on any thing only that *such a thing might have been waur.* I thank you for your hints about my letter-writing, but for my blessing, dear Mr. Scott, do not shew my letters to any body for when I write to a friend I just take what comes uppermost without any rule whatever.

Scott remembers his friend

By the bye Mr. Scott (I have enow of Mr.'s in this letter) I have met with a prodigy since I saw you, a gentleman who will be no small acquisition, I hope, to your correspondence, and who is desirous above all things to attain that. You are his favourite bard; he has your works for distinction sake bound in gold, and can repeat by heart every verse that ever you composed. Nay, he would wager his whole estate that he would repeat every word of yours that ever you published in poetry, save one in the *Lay* which he

[1] An abortive project for the Highland Society to assist the publication of Hogg's letters, "A Journey through the Highlands," contributed to the "Scots Magazine," and never reprinted.

[2] Refers to Scott's appointment as Clerk of Sessions while in London, where he was being "feted and caressed." Scott recited "Gilmanscleuch" from *The Mountain Bard* to the Princess of Wales to secure her aid for Hogg—as he similarly secured it for Southey.

[3] *i.e.*, Scott's younger son, Charles.

never can mind. He repeats with uncommon energy. I have heard him repeat all the *Lay*, as well as the other pieces published in the *Minstrelsy*. The introduction and two first parts of the *Lay* he said to a large and very genteel company, and till that time I never thought they could have been productive of as good effect. He has the battle of Pentland Hills which would form a compleat history of the Cameronians and several antient songs. He is Andw Livingston, Esq., of Airds by Castle Douglas. I was trying to take a farm from him, but we did not agree. He will possibly give you a call, but if he do not I think you should write to him. He has nearly 2,000£ of yearly rent.

Ever since I got your letter from London, at which I was not a little surprised, I have been writing notes to the ballads which are mostly traditional.[1] I can get nothing to say to "Gilmanscleuch," you must write a short preface to it at least who know the airs and circumstances. It is least my favourite of all the ballads, and if I have any sway no part of it shall be printed as a specimen. I will send you copies with the first carrier, and by all means let this publication go on. The most favourable season for the Highland letters is lost,[2] but this must proceed cost what it will. I will not have it said that my children always come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth. For my sake, my dear Scott, if you think there is any chance for a farm of the Duke,[3] push your request; you cannot think [how] ardently I long to be my own man again [until] which time I can never make any progress as an author. How would you like to write, as I do now, amongst a housefull of brutal, noisy servants. But I have no other alternative but the fields. What would you think of my writing a line to one of the family myself. I have no time to lose, else I would wait for your advise in this; and now I think I will write to Lady Dalkeith. If it do no good, it can do no ill. If I lose this opportunity no body knows when he will have farms again to let, and I have means enow for stocking an ordinary farm near my friends. There now, my sheet is done, and I am not well begun; and what I have written is a mere hotch-potch. Lord help you poor shepherd.

Among brutal servants

James Hogg.

[1] *i.e.*, comprising *The Mountain Bard*, the notes to which include excellent stories.

[2] *Vide* note 1, page 86.

[3] of Buccleuch, who years later, as the result of Hogg's letter to the Duchess (see page 284) gave him the life-rent of a small farm, a competence ruined by the Shepherd's love of hospitality and—Edinburgh.

From the same

MITCHEL-SLACKS,
21st May, 1806.

DEAR SIR,—I received yours brim-full of Criticisms—articles which I mortally abhor—and have been taking them under consideration.

Hates altering his poems

I must apprize you how much I hate alterations in any of my poetical pieces, and that before I had the chain of my ideas and story broken by them I would rather consent to the exclusion of the piece altogether. You are by this time sensible that it never will be from correctness and equality that I am to depend on for my poetic character, but only from scattered expressive tints and from some little interest which the heart feels in them, and it is only from a conviction that if one man in Britain have a proper discernment in that species of poetry, it is you, that I am induced to listen at all to them. I think " Sir David Graham " [1] may pass as it is. It is on the plan which you recommended on hearing the beginning of it, and the very way I intended. The verse you quarrel with in " The Pedlar " [1] is easily altered thus

> I wish he had staid, he so earnestly pray'd,
> And he hecht a braw pearling in present to gi'e.[2]

In " Gideon Murray " I put the verse into the lady's mouth which you hinted at, and as you say no more of it I suppose it is to pass. These, with the preface, will serve the press until we think about the others, as after all I would rather have it to proceed at leisure than that they should appear unhouseld, unanointed, unaneal'd, with all their imperfections on their heads.

I think now that you were right in blotting out my early poetry from the preface, which, however, I only meant to appear as an instance of the progress of *genious*. You are at liberty to make what alterations in the prose you please. Give Ballantyne orders to stick by the MS. I positively will not have them printed without apostrophe's as yours and Leyden's are. I think there should be only four Stanzas in the page, though I do not like a very large type. If you have not published the proposals [*i.e.*, the prospectus] note that the book must be of a large size as there are yet a number of ballads I mean to insert. These are " Douglas Lord of Liddisdale " [and] " The Laird of Lairiston," a border tale of the same length. If " Thirlestane " appear it must be as a fragment for sake of the story ; [and] " Willie Wilkin," as long as any of them, save

[1] Both ballads appeared in " The Scots Magazine," being reprinted in *The Mountain Bard*. With reference to revision, Hogg says, in another letter to Scott : " I would not have it [altered] for a guinea, scarce as I am of money."

[2] *i.e.*, promised a piece of lace.

two. Willie Wilkin's death and burial: this is a popular ancient story hereabouts. He has been a second edition of Michael Scott on a smaller type and coarser paper. Of the pieces that are *not* imitations of the antients I will not insist on the insertion of any save "Sandy Tod" which has gained me more encomiums as a poet and more correspondents than anything I ever published even though some of my best ballads have appeared.[1] If you wish to have a copy of "Gilmanscleuch" of your own writing I will send you a very few alterations and additions concerning Harden, with whom you have made me somewhat enamoured, or if you please I will re-write it myself.

The verse you have scratched out of "Mess John"[2] let it go to him whom it concerns: I hate indelicacy. Your observation about the Grey-mares-tail[3] is d——d nonsense, and enough to make a sow laugh at it. The cataract has no other name: and why will you make a quibble of antient names? The saving of the lass of Graizyburn would improve the story in one respect, and hurt it in other two. In the former case it would exemplify the pleasing idea of an over-ruling providence protecting beauty and innocence, and on the other it would spoil the story, as it is at present told, and the death of the [priest] would be too severe a recompence for his intended crime.[4] However, though it is far too long an alteration for me, I shall think of it. Throw as little cold water on it at first as possible. I am rather of a particular temper, and as I must abide by the consequences I will expect a considerable sway in the publication. A constant correspondence between us will be necessary.

His particular temper

I am half mad because I cannot have a single conversation with you about things. What ballads are they which you have in the press? How is "Nichol" and "Graham" going to succeed?[5] I expected considerable things from both: will they run as fast through editions as the *Lay*.—Your much obliged,

JAMES HOGG.

This letter is Endorsed by Scott—"Hog," and the date follows.

[1] Nevertheless, Hogg overrated it.

[2] A story of black magic much liked by Scott, who quotes it in his notes to *Marmion*.

[3] A water-fall in Ettrick Forest.

[4] The ballad is about a love-lorn priest, who made a figure of the girl in wax and tortured it somehow "with fire and steel." The sequel is confused; it is hard to say whether the girl kept herself safe or what happened. Perhaps the story suffered in alteration.

[5] Poems in Scott's *Ballads and Lyrical Pieces*, published later in the year.

From the same

EDINBURGH,
May, 1808.

DEAR SCOTT,—Now when I have got to this town I find that both you, Mr. Greive, and Mr. Constable are out of it, and consequently that I might have saved myself the trouble of coming so far. I received your letter, in course, where, as I expected, I found that you were still interesting yourself in my wayward fortune as deeply as ever, and as long as that is the case I am never afraid of being sore beat. Something I must do, for I have given up my farm which I was obliged to do, my stock being dead out. I really do not know anything about the Excise, besides I am far too old for going into it according to the rules prescribed by the Board,[1] and, to tell the truth, I would rather be an ensign in the Earl of Dalkeith's regiment of militia than a common exciseman.[2] Perhaps I am wrong, and I am perfectly passive to your opinion. But I believe you will not find it an easy matter to procure me a place in the excise. There is one situation which would suit me extremely well, but it is not yet vacant though the holder is grown quite doited. That is, surveyor of the taxes for Ettrick Forest &c. I have asked several friends what course they thought it proper I should follow now, but their answers are invariably: "You must see what Walter Scott says." So that, my dear sir, I will not, nor can I, form any engagement until I hear what you say. I have not got my affairs settled in the country yet, which, if I do, will leave me a good many pounds worse than nothing. I want by bargain a considerable sum from Constable, but he is from home, and as the *Mountain Bard* is not sold off I understand I will not get any at this time. It is my debtor's rule never to pay me. I have not received payment for one in six of my subscribers; and I believe many of the lists are lost. I get a lees on *Marmion* every day in Constable's, and until I get through it the news-papers will not suffer sore by my perusal.[3] I heard two gentlemen reading with great glee and much laughter several sheets of a paragraph upon part of it, yesterday, which they gave me to understand would be published. The verse seemed not at all contemptible, but the matter bore every mark of malice and envy. There were 240

Desire to be an officer

[1] "Hogg has driven his pigs to a bad market. I am endeavouring to have him made an Excise Officer."—Scott to his brother Thomas (June 20, 1808).

[2] Lockhart says it was no secret among Hogg's intimates that though the Shepherd wrote some capital war-songs, his nerves were not heroically strung.

[3] The tall Shepherd with his plaid, browsing in Scott's poem free of charge during daily visits to Constable's shop, must have presented a striking picture.

copies of *Marmion* sold in Constable's shop yesterday forenoon. Jeffery's [*sic*] review of it, I am told, is in some instances bitter to the last degree. It is no matter, either I am grossly mistaken, or there are more *natural* beauties in *Marmion* than all your others ; and as long as that is admired (which it ever will be by a part) so will *Marmion*. You give the truest picture of your manner of writing in the introduction to Mr. Erskine that ever was given, [or] ever will, and I am particularly partial to that epistle. I think it extremely beautifull. I should like extremely well to see another poem of yours in the same stanza with *Glenfinlas*, my first and, I believe, still greatest favourite.[1] I will stay in town till Monday morning, and before that time I will expect a letter from you in return ; and I daresay you will be under the necessity (that is a strange expression) of inclosing £3, or an order for that sum—else as neither Mr. Greive nor Constable are at home I may be unable to pay my expences here and home again.—I am your poor unfortunate,

JAMES HOGG.

From the same

LOCHERBEN BY THORNHILL,
July 28, 1809.

DEAR SCOTT,—It is true, I believe it, that all earthly comforts must come to an end, but why our correspondence languishes and threatens to fall into a total desuetude I cannot comprehend.[2] We have never differed in thought, word, nor action, and the supposition is untenable that you have declined it because I have been unfortunate in my worldly affairs. I have experienced your good wishes and your good offices times and ways without number, and I never expected being able to make you any returns save contributing a little to the same kind of pleasure which you would experience on cultivating and cherishing some beautifull wild flower, planted by the hand of nature in some inhospitable muir.

A "beautiful wild flower"

I know perfectly well that you are much more dissapointed than I am that I have never been able to attain to any thing better than labouring for my daily bread ; it has been my own blame, and I am so much of a predistenarian as to live quite easy on that account. I only beg you will imbibe any body's sentiments concerning me in the whole world but Peele's, and let us write no more of places, and appointments, and chances ; but about friends,

[1] Scott's first published Ballad (1799).

[2] A partial explanation is in the opening words of another letter from Hogg to Scott : "I was born to plague you." But Scott never neglected his friend for long.

books, ballads, songs, and such things. And first as to friends, Mr. Greive, the hatter, has been a true and a liberal one to me. He is some way or another convinced of my superior merit as a *poet*, and nothing else influences him in the least: he has supplied me constantly with newspapers, clothes, shoes, hats, and pocket money whenever he knew I wanted it.[1] Constable, I suggest, has more sail than ballast,[2] and is become too important a man to do so much good as he might. I have much more hope of the Messrs. Ballantynes, whose great success seems to be balanced by generosity, good sense, and a refined taste. I doubt you will acquiesce in my opinion, but I look upon little John Ballantyne as the best judge of composition in general that I have ever met with even beyond a comparison.[3] This brings to my mind a proposal I was making to Mr. Grieve, and you must tell me whether or not it is practicable. My book having been twice rouped off[4] I am miserable for books, and I was proposing that the Ballantynes should be petitioned to keep a copy of every congenial book that they print as a tax upon the publishers for the benefit of a *poor author*. I do not see how it can cost any body almost anything.

A tax to aid a poor author

My occupation is so laborious here that I have no time at all to finish any large work; several smaller pieces I am frequently producing. I projected and went a good length with a large poem entitled *The Sutors of Selkirk*, but, from being persuaded by friends of the incongruity of the title with the matter, I sticked it. The principal one on the carpet at present is one on *love* which is already advanced considerably above an hundred single stanzas [? one of the poems in *The Queen's Wake*]. It is in English, and much more refined and fewer fallings off in it than any of my former ones, and must probably make the first in my next collection. But hard work precludes the probability of its speedy conclusion and arrangement. Another thing you must solve me in: Mr. Morrison called at Locherben in April last, when I was absent in Ettrick, leaving sundry gentlemen's com[plimen]ts, and yours among the rest, with five guineas in the hands of our maid servant for me. He went off, L—d kens whether to measure his roads and fields, and though I made many enquiries I have never been able to learn

[1] The Edinburgh tradesman's zealous care for the Shepherd is testified by Lockhart.

[2] A shrewd surmise considering Constable's downfall, 17 years later, involving Scott in ruin.

[3] But here the Shepherd was wide of the mark. John Ballantyne was more a juggler of bills of accommodation than judge of literature.

[4] *i.e.*, sold by auction.

to whom I am indebted for that money; if it came from you the best thanks you can receive is to be asured that it found me without a shilling or a certainty where I could get one.

Now dear Scott, how are you and what are you doing? And how is Gilnockie, whom of all the family I rather long most to see? What does his features, propensities, and demeanour amongst his fellows prognosticate? A warrior? Or a Lord of the Bench? How is the lady and all the rest? Is old Camp living? Comfortable now he can hardly be? Hector is gone—

> And like my songs hard luck has found,
> When by the Shirra's Kempy tuzzled,
> Deil that the critic an' his hound
> Like snarling tikes were clogg'd an' muzzled.[1]

I may also inform [you] that two other young gentlemen and myself were conjoined about an anonymous publication of two small volumes entitled *Beauties of the Scottish Poets of the present day.* [But] on account of my absence from town, who am the main drudge in it, it is postponed for some time, though the materials are considerably arranged. I hope to have your opinion of all these and many things forbye in a short time,[2] and in the faith of it will subscribe myself, your ever grateful Shepherd,

JAMES HOGG.

From the same

EDIN.
Saturday 8th Sept. [1810].

DEAR SCOTT,—The first and second numbers of the "Spy" are now published. The first paper has been in general accused, although productive of considerable curiosity; the second has rather astonished them, and is selling very fast this forenoon. I had not one subscriber in Edin., save yourself, when the first No. was published; and I see I have this day upwards 100 esquires, exclusive of others. As I am this incoming week to make out a regular list of them I want your directions if there is any noblemen of your acquaintance whose names I may venture to insert near the beginning, for I have not yet an *honourable* save two—and they are both ladies. I rolled up the first Number with a letter to you, but Mr. Ballantyne has not yet sent it off. So I thought it proper to inform you by post how I was coming on, as you call

[1] Camp and Hector, the dogs of Scott and Hogg respectively. Here is apparently an impromptu verse. In the 2nd line, "Shirra" = Scott; and "Kempy" = Jeffrey.

[2] The plan was rejected by the coadjutors selected, Scott retorting sharply that "every herring should hang by its ain head." Thereupon the Shepherd wrote clever parodies of Wordsworth, Byron, Scott, Coleridge, Southey, himself, etc., published as *The Poetic Mirror* (1815).

it ; and if you have no immediate conveyance otherwise, I wish you would take the same method of letting me hear from you.

By the by, as it is grown quite fashionable for every critical writer to *aim* a blow at you, though they have never yet been able to hit you so as to hurt, so my correspondent who introduces Mr. Shuffleton has some of these in a paper that must appear in two or three weeks. If you care one farthing about it I will send you the page in my own MS. that you may erase out of it whatever you please, and I will take the blame of it, for I never found more necessity for evasion than I have done these eight days. Yet I must acknowledge that were they not levelled against my best friend and patron I would (from the independent character the " Spy " has assumed to himself) rather that they remained.[1] The want of your presence, Erskine's, and General Dirom's merely to make mention of such a thing in circles you frequent is some pounds out of my pocket weekly at present, but such things may come round.

I cannot tell whether Peel has any legal charge against me for debt or not, though I have some suspicion of it ; and I very much fear if he have, that I have little to hope in his forbearance if ever he have a chance of being the better for his trouble. I need not give you directions in such a case as that, but I daresay you could procure me a discharge from that quarter which may be of use, though at present I do not regard it. Farewell, my dear Scott, good sport to you, and good health to you and yours that you may enjoy it. I have sometimes been eiry [*sic*] for losing your countenance, but I hope the symptoms originate entirely in my own brains for on a diligent retrospect I can trace no other [cause]. When a man loses conceit of himself he thinks, and not without foundation, that everybody does the [? same]—at least these sentiments have sometimes been in possession of

His uneasiness

JAMES HOGG.

From the same

GABRIEL'S ROAD,
Tuesday, 28th Feby. [1815].

MR. SCOTT,—I think it is great nonsense for two men who are friends at heart, and who ever must be so—indeed it is not in the

[1] It is not improbable that the mysterious " Mr. Shuffleton " was Hogg, who is here apologetically breaking the news of his falling in with the critical fashion, and hoping to secure an expression of Scott's usual disinterestedness in such attacks on himself. There is no doubt that most, if not all, the articles in Hogg's paper the " Spy " were written by him.

nature of things that they can be otherwise—should be professed enemies.[1]

Mr. Grieve and Mr. Laidlaw, who were very severe on me and to whom I was obliged to show your letter, have long ago convinced me that I mistook part of it, and that it was not me you held in such contempt, but the opinion of the public. The idea that you might mean that (though I still think the reading will bear either construction) has given me much pain, for I know I answered yours intemperately and in a mortal rage. I meant to have inclosed yours, and begged of you to return mine, but I cannot find it, and am sure that some one to whom I have been induced to show it has taken it away. However, as my troubles on that subject are never like to wear to an end, I could not longer resist telling you that I am extremely vexed about it. I desire not a renewal of our former intimacy, for haply, after what I have written to you, your family could not suffer it ; but I wish it might be understood that when we meet *by chance* we might shake hands and speak to one another as old acquaintances, and likewise that we might exchange a letter occasionally, for I find there are many things which I yearn to communicate to you, and the tears always rush to my eyes when I consider that I may not.

Pleads for friendship

If you allow of this, pray let me know ; and if you do not, let me know. Indeed, I am anxious to hear honestly how you feel, for " as the day of trouble is with me, so shall my strength be." To be friends *from the teeth forward* is common enough ; but it strikes me that there is even something more ludicrous in the reverse of the picture, and so to be enemies—and why should I be, *from the teeth forward*,—yours sincerely,

JAMES HOGG.*

From the same

ALTRIVE LAKE,
June 26th, 1821.

DEAR SIR WALTER,—To my utter mortification and dissapointment I have this day received a letter from my Bookseller refusing my new work on his usual terms of publishing with me.[2] For

[1] This appears to be Hogg's apologia for a letter to Scott beginning " Dammed Sir," and ending " Yours with disgust." The association of the two men was interrupted ; but, when the Shepherd lay dangerously ill in an Edinburgh alley, Scott surreptitiously aided him. This letter, from the same lodgings, promptly brought a brief reply telling Hogg to think no more of the business, and come to breakfast next morning.

[2] Probably his *Three Perils of Man : A Border Romance* (2 vols., Longman, 1822).

what? Because forsooth, I copy his own words: "Though it displays great originality of thought and a good deal of fancy, it is of that cast that must draw down comparisons with the romances of the author of *Waverley* and manifestly to its disadvantage, these being made the criterion of judging of merit. Therefore he is sorry &c." But the truth is, I believe, he found I was going to press too hard for money at too early a date. This refusal has damned my work for publishing in Edin.[burgh], at least to be of any use to me in my present emergency, and in the mean time my noble master's excellent farm is lying with half a stock on it, and not one man in the world to support or credit me to the value of a shilling. I believe you must support me, Sir Walter, for it is such an easy matter for you to render me independent of any body save yourself, and I would so much rather be obliged to you that I will not ask any other till you refuse me. This comes very ill off my hand, for you warned me of the risk I run ere you asked the farm for me, but I am not to blame. My father-in-law made me take a farm if I got the offer of one, and not fear for the stocking of it; but since that period he has been taken in with the failures in the West to an amount that quite incapacitates him for the present to assist any one. By the failure of his own son he lost £5,000, and about half as much by other things—and all at once. Besides I had no thought that I could not bring my new work to account in some way or other. I will tell you precisely what I want, which owing to the cheap turn that stock has taken is not very much: I want £50 next month; £100 at Martinmas; and £50 next May. I might, perhaps, require a little more to make *the most* of my farm; but without this I cannot go on. I require likewise from you cash for a good bill of £150 next month, which, not being due till March, I cannot present at the bank. This is all I want in the course of the year—as you see £200; and as I owe no man a pound save £12 to one of my own servants I will give you security on my stock. You cannot imagine, my dear Sir Walter, how anxious I am about this. After the kind way in which you asked the farm and the generous manner in which Lord Montague [1] gave me the preference to twelve other applicants, to be beat with it would not only ruin all my prospects in life but it would absolutely break my heart. There is another way in which you could render me independent in my farm at once, merely by promising to Constable, Murray, Longman, or any you please to go over my new work,

All he wants!

[1] For the young Duke of Buccleuch.

either in proof or MS. I felt long ago when I took you up as my pattern and master in literature that without you I could not do. I feel it now once more as strongly as ever. For these five years bygone I thought myself quite independent, and calculated on continuing so. If it had not been such a large concern coming on me at once, so I would. But I trust to be soon more independent than ever.

I have got 300 ewes and 223 lambs on the farm, a compleat set of labouring utensils, two middling horses, and about half a stock of cattle; and for these I have endorsed bills. I still want 500 lambs and hoggs at St. Boswell's fair, which completes my stock save a few cows, and all these I will get as cheap as I like. I have sown 22 acres of turnips and four of potatoes, and am going to do everything I can do. I must see you before St. Boswell's fair.[1] Be so kind as to answer this; and tell me where I will find you, and what I am to expect; and till then believe me,—Yours ever most affectionately,

JAMES HOGG.

THOMAS CAMPBELL (1777–1844)

OF these four poets Time has been perhaps least kind to the fame of Thomas Campbell, although he was buried with great pomp in that very mixed gallery, the Poet's Corner in Westminster Abbey, where was no hope for such as Byron and Keats. He was the youngest of our group, yet came to the earliest reputation. His *Pleasures of Hope*, with the later *Gertrude of Wyoming*, gave him far greater celebrity for a time than fell to Coleridge or Wordsworth. But his name would be far less familiar were it not for his odes "Ye Mariners of England" and "The Battle of the Baltic." We have already met him in Lady Abercorn's drawing-room, where he was agreeable with few of the women and none of the men. He would be happier when he reached his own fireside and his lively and elegant wife—that is, except on those frequent occasions when the duns were waiting for him. For Campbell's was a more desperate case than that of either James Hogg or Southey where finances were concerned. He was, as he said, "always ready to shoot himself when he came to cash accounts." Most of his letters to Scott were written with the pistol in the other hand. The figurative weapon was dropped when in 1805 an over-awed Government granted him a pension of £200. It was kicked away light-heartedly when a distant relative, as a tribute to Campbell's filial piety, observed that "little Tommy the Poet ought to have a legacy"—died—and left him

[1] Next month Scott went to attend the Coronation of George IV. To advance Hogg's interests he got an invitation for the Shepherd. Hogg's concern over his farm made him refuse the tempting offer; and Scott used to say—"he stood balancing the matter whether to go to the Coronation or the fair of St. Boswell, and the fair carried it." This letter is endorsed by Sir Walter: "James Hogg, Cash troubles."

£5,000. The Ettrick Shepherd was also good to his aged parents; but nobody ever had to congratulate him on a thing like that. Such is the whirligig of Fortune. Campbell went on to do work which was as poor as that of his early career was brave and successful. His last letter—written apparently because Rumour had been whispering to Scott—dates some six years after the death of his wife, and when he was still being lionized.

From Thomas Campbell

SYDENHAM,
1 April, 1800.

My Dear Scott,—I received yesterday your letters, and that to Longman has succeeded as well as possible.[1] In the fever of a temporary complaint called by Frenchmen Le Catch-Cold, I have just command of pen and eyesight sufficient to thank you with a most grateful heart for a kindness and a kindness so agreeably done. I really shall never forget the impression I felt on reading your letter. The consciousness of having been obliged to have recourse to what is even among friends a trial of friendship and a something connected with delicacy had given me a little uneasiness. Your style and manner of writing is so full of confidence and of unaffected kindness as entirely to relieve me. I am infinitely encouraged by what you say of your own fortune. I thought it had been founded on paternal inheritance. I hold your progress before me as a comfortable encouragement to shew what a cheerful industrious use of talents can accomplish. I delight to think of your happiness, having a sympathetic anticipation that your brother bard in the bleaker snows of Parnassus may one day batten in such another rich inclosure as your own habitation. I thank God I have very tolerable prospects. I have now so many pleasing incitements to industry, such a wife, and such a child as would make any but the heart of a scoundrel beat with no other wish than to get forward in life for their sakes. In London, it is true, I have but few intimate friends: these, however, I scarcely want, having so much inestimable companionship at my own fireside.

Early life a devil of a scene

I have, I may safely say, not a ninetieth part of that disagreeable ebbing of spirits which in my state of celibacy made me often a burthen to myself, and only at very particular times a sufferable associate even to those I most loved. The early part of my life, however, was a devil of a scene: it was cursed with a number of

[1] This letter is endorsed by Scott:—Tom Campbell, April 1800. Acknowledges advance of fifty guineas by Longman & Co. [*i.e.*, a loan from Scott drawn on Longmans].

events which are known scarce to any but myself.[1] But Absinthion, the Star of bitterness, has seemed to set on my fortune. I hope it is now out of my system altogether.

Now I have a serious advice to ask on a literary subject, and I preface it with this request that you will let it be a secret between us. I want some tolerable poem, French or German, to translate, and I wish you to chuse it for me—any about the size of from 600 to 1000 lines. My reason for secrecy is that a rascally bookseller, who is persecuting me to fill up a volume of a certain size by misinterpreting a verbal agreement, and may not know that I mean to give him translation lest he pick another quarrel about *original or translated.* If I get a good poem and do it well, the sight of it will abate all dispute—time being precious [I cannot expect] to produce original matter so soon. . .

There is a Mohawk Indian in town who whoops the war whoop to ladies in Drawing-rooms and is the reigning rage of the town this season. He is an arch dog, and palms a number of old Scotch tunes (he was educated in the Woods by a Scotch woman) for Indian Opera Airs on his discerning audience. Rogers the poet (somebody told me) being one of the élite spectators of this wonder, at hearing proposals for the whoop was seen to shrink with a look of inexpressible horror, and hide himself behind a sopha.—Adieu my dear friend. . . Believe me sincerely yours,

Rogers hides himself

THOS. CAMPBELL.

From the same

SYDENHAM COMMON,
Feb. 9, 1805.

MY DEAR SCOTT,—It will seem incredible to you that your welcome letter, of date the 2nd of last [month], should have reached Sydenham only this morning. It is explained by the affidavit of Mr. Orme, the bookseller, who says he delivered it to the wrong Coach Office; and the gentry there, I suppose from their over-anxiety to find me out, took sufficient time to make the search. Any man might be proud of such a present after reading its contents; and to receive it with a remembrance of your esteem, is a circumstance that makes me both proud and pleased.[2] I shall hand it down to my boy, the heir-apparent of my house, as a very

[1] Scott wrote to Joanna Baillie (1816): "As to our leal friend Tom Campbell, I have heard stories of his morbid sensibility chiefly from the Minto family, with whom he lived for some time. . . . But whatever I saw of him myself—and we were often together—was quite composed and manly."

[2] A copy of *The Lay of the Last Minstrel.*

valuable possession—it will teach him to keep good company, since his father did not walk, in his youth, with little Men.

The inspired "Lay"

On the subject of the Poem—this monument of your genius which will be judged of by ages more impartial than the present—I can say nothing further than that the joint effect of the whole is such as I expected from the inspired passages with which you delighted me in recitation; and that *new* passages arise to me on the first reading of the same exalted stamp. Any minute suggestion respecting peculiar beauties or imperfections, such as they seem in my eyes, I should like to make in communing with yourself. On the former I should dwell at greater length—not from complaisance, but from necessity and truth. On the latter I could make myself understood in three minutes' conversation; but I am not trained critic enough to write them. I am a novice at the vocabulary of taste. I think I may soon have an opportunity of seeing you, and holding a conversation in which I shall be as impudent as the devil accusing Job.

I am glad to hear of Edin[burgh] such agreeable news. God bless your meetings! I am unfortunate not to be among you.

The style and strain of this letter, I know, will appear to have rather an air of lamp-light than day-light writing. It is necessary to confess that I am a little disturbed with some of the nervous affections, to which I am always subject when any accident disturbs either my health or rest. A pair of unlucky accidents have thrown Mrs. Campbell into sickness; and by watching her, to relieve the other attendants, I have forfeited a good deal of wholesome sleep. As you are not a naughty minded bachelor I may tell you that my poor little Partner has been frightened in a situation when frights are almost deadly. The first cause of her agitation was the parting with an illustrious Prime Minister whom we disbanded from the Kitchen. She had been recommended to us as faithful and sober; and although she had more than human ugliness and masculine ferocity, and had been some years on board of a man-of-war with her husband, we trusted to the predictions of her panegyrists that she would turn out well. In five weeks, however, her slang broke out; and within the seventh she discovered the whole catalogue of Vices of which a very ugly woman can be guilty. One fatal day she fell upon us in a state of insane intoxication, venting cries of rage some what like a Bacchanalian, and tagg'd to our names all the opprobrious epithets that the English language supplies. An

A kitchen melodrama

energetic mind in this state of inflammation, and a face naturally Gorgonian, kindled to the white heat of fury, and venting the dialect of the damn'd, were objects sufficiently formidable to silence our whole household. The Oratrix and the Meretrix continued her imprecations till I lock'd up my wife, child, and nurse, to be out of her reach ; and, descending to the Kitchen, paid her wages and hurled her forthwith out of my doors. She howled with absolute rage. During the dispute she cursed us for hell-fire children of brimstone whose religion was the religion of the cats and dogs (we had not been in Church at Sydenham). I asked the Virago what was her religion, since her practice was so devout. " Mine " (says she) " is the religion of the *Royal Navy*," at the same time showing a Prayer Book. During our parley she made the best effort in her power to get hold of a dividing knife. Finally, this Medea,—wishing no doubt (if she had only possessed the fiery nags and the winged Chariot of Medea the elder) to cut all our throats and mount through the clouds to a foreign and—being disappointed in her haughty projects of revenge, contented herself with burning a few muslin articles, greasing the shoe brushes, breaking some earthenware, [and with] horrible exclamations whacking our poor cat to the very brink of her [? life]. Having done so, and for want of a fiery chariot, she took the road to London on the top of the stage coach.

Yesterday, my wife still continuing delicate in her health, I was taking a walk with her nearly within [sight of] our own door, which is a solitary part of the common. An ill-looking man, mounted on a beautiful horse, passed us. He went to both sides of the hill, came back and returned, and came back again, after looking on the road to see if it was clear. On coming close to us he demanded our names. I spoke to him strongly at first, and threatened to call for assistance. He half dismounted ; but hearing me holla to some workmen in the neighbourhood, he took his seat again, and after some incoherent expostulations with me —rode off. I got Mrs. Campbell, with difficulty, home in strong fits. The gentleman on horseback was instantly pursued, and caught after a hot pursuit. He was brought before Justice Bowles *the Pamphleteer*. In his struggles to escape, I had the satisfaction to have a fair excuse for giving him some hearty kicks and twisting his handkerchief almost to the well-earn'd point of strangulation. His intention was clear ; but Justice Bowles, finding he had not asked for money, chose to fine him in a trifle, and set him at large.

Poet's way with highwayman

I mean, however, not to rest on the decision of Justice Bowles, for we have got his name and address. This accident has nearly occasioned a very serious misfortune—Mrs. Campbell is still feverish and ill, and will no doubt feel the consequence of this affair. I should have reckoned the transaction ten times pleasanter if he had asked our money at once ; but it is a trick of these gentlemen to extort money by indirect means. His pistols he had probably thrown away before discovery ; for there were strings about his belt which looked like what might be supporters of fire arms. Justice B— is certainly not a second Daniel. With Compliments to Mrs. Scott, I remain my dear Friend,—yours very sincerely,

T. CAMPBELL.*

From the same [RECEIVED, 6TH JUNE, 1805.]

DEAR SCOTT,—Messrs. Cadell and Davies have communicated to me the intelligence of our literary projects having coincided as to name and nature on the subject of the British Poets. What is it that Aeneas says of perishing by the hand of Achilles. I rejoice that the plan is taken from me by a hand so powerful, I really do my dear Scott. It would have gone to my heart to see any of the Hodman hods of literature proposing for this gigantic plan ; but to see it in your hands, I am happy for the sake of taste and my native country. You will do it gloriously, deeply and strongly with research to inform us, with fire to warm us, and with taste to enlighten us.

I know not what to say to Mr. Cadell's proposition about joining me in the undertaking, a proposition which he said he would make to yourself and Mr. Constable. As to the butteraceous Bookseller, I have no objections to him ; but I am sure I should prove a so-so associate with you. I thought it proper, however, to let you know how far I had gone with the London gentry, lest they, devising cunningly to ask our terms separately, should found an over-reaching bargain over the one (eventually) on the supposed inferior terms of the other. They asked my terms for thirty Lives, and I gave in the same estimate which Sir James Mackintosh offered, *a thousand pounds*. Now *verbum sapienti* : they are the greatest ravens on earth with whom we have to deal, liberal enough as booksellers go, but still (you know) ravens—the ravens, croakers, suckers of innocent blood and living men's brains. The case is they have already told me about fifteen or sixteen lies respecting the offers that have been made to them for furnishing these lives. One man offered to stake his whole reputation on the work [at]

" Ravens and blood-suckers "

£150—this was told to me as a damper is thrown over muslin that is going to be singed. But I still took what the Dr. Anderson calls "high ground," and talked of £1000 as a small perquisite for this labor. I told the bookman that a reputation that was staked so cheap did not deserve to be impaled. Whereat the bookman laughed, conceiving that it must be wit as it was a pun.

Now tell me freely, my dear Scott, as to your views on the undertaking.[1] If they are serious and long devised then I must not think of joining you in the most distant mode of responsibility; but if you have only lately thought of the Work I may not be quite useless to you. Unprepared as I am, I request you by the true and trustable sincerity of your disposition to let no stepping stones of delicacy be between us. Just let me know that you come to the work with deliberate preparation, and I shall think it a fair and friendly warning to quitt [*sic*] a thing for which, in friendship and confidence I own to you, I have no great idea of my own capability and a perfect consciousness of being unprepared for any immediate attack on it. I shall be obliged to you to communicate your ideas to me respecting the nature and extent of any part I could undertake with no other preparation than a general acquaintance with poetry and enthusiasm in the feeling of its beauties.

I know it is treating you with too much liberty to talk thus of booksellers' terms, because your lot in life is independent of them as mine is not. But my only intention is that these cunning ones should not get between us before we had some communication on the subject as to terms: it is of consequence to the general cause of letters that neither Journeymen like myself nor Master independent Artists like you should be over-reached in their transactions.

Constable is a deep draw-well. I was really duped by him, but I have found him out. It is not two months ago since he absolutely made me believe he had not been meant by nature for a bookseller; but the cold grease has at last appeared. He is a piece of the most fallacious fat meat that ever was packed into a human skin. But God knows, he is not the worst of the bunch. Will you favor me with a few lines on the subject.

My son Alison Campbell was born last Sunday. Believe me, your affectionate friend,

THOS. CAMPBELL.*

[1] The reference is to a complete edition of British Poets which Scott proposed to Constable. When it was found that other publishers had a similar project on foot and had approached Campbell to write the biographical prefaces, Scott suggested that they should join forces in the "very superb work," to which Campbell warmly assented. The plan eventually fell through after the negotiations of which the poet here writes so bitterly.

From the same

NO. I, MIDDLE SCOTLAND YARD,
Whitehall, 30 May, 1830.

DEAR SIR WALTER,—I believe I have boasted to you before now that I don't, on an average, introduce to you more than one person in a thousand that requests of me an introduction to you. This is one part of my apology for begging leave to introduce to you my young friend Lt. Edwd. Hodge, who is now quarter'd with his regiment in Edingh. The other is that his father Major Edwd. Hodge, who was one of my intimate friends, fell in the field of Quatre Bras when charging the French at the head of his Squadron of the 7th Hussars. He was a right good man and soldier. I have known his boy from his infancy, and like him much; and therefore recommend him to your notice and countenance, my dear great Poet of Chivalry.

When Napier of the "Edinburgh"[1] returns to you he will probably tell in your city how heartily I laugh'd at the regrets of my Edingh friends for my supposed intend'd marriage with a certain Lady with a parrot nose and blue stockings, whom you knew in Edingh. Why it is all the baseless fabric of a Vision. Besides it was that damn'd fellow Thom. Moore who literally pushed her upon my literary Chaperonship, if I may use the phrase. I merely deliver'd her of a book, and never had the smallest intention of . . . I thank you, nevertheless, for having been concerned about me.—Believe me, my dear Sir Walter, yours truly,

Moore introduces a lady

T. CAMPBELL.

[1] Macvey Napier, who had succeeded Jeffrey as Editor of the "Edinburgh Review."

THE MYSTERY OF "THE AUTHOR OF *WAVERLEY*"

From J. B. S. Morritt . .	The Wrong Quarterly falls into Scott's Trap.
[*The same*] . . .	*Waverley* comes out.
Maria Edgeworth . .	Who really wrote it.
Thomas Frognall Dibdin .	Scott as *locum tenens*.
Lord Meadowbank . .	How the Veil was Lifted.
B. R. Haydon . . .	"Got you at Last."
Professor G. A. Browne .	A Bet for a Rump and Dozen.

THE MYSTERY OF "THE AUTHOR OF *WAVERLEY*"

THE mystery of "The Author of *Waverley*," one of the most remarkable in the story of anonymous literature, is something of a mystery of explanations. Scott sang himself into fame at the comparatively late age of 34 with *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, which was followed by *Marmion* and *The Lady of the Lake*. There came another "darling" poet on the scene; one who, instead of warriors, and minstrels, and the noble daughters of Border chiefs, dealt in harems, and pirates, and languishing beauties, and strange youths—a poet of whom wicked stories were whispered, which is generally an attraction to a wicked world. Scott's star was being outshone by Byron's, when, in a moment of inspiration, the Minstrel took up the first chapters of a discarded story. *Waverley* (1814) was published anonymously, and with instant success. After it came the long series of tales by "The Author of *Waverley*," the fast-flowing editions of which the world took to its bosom with rapturous delight. Some twenty persons were admitted into the secret of the authorship, which was kept with a loyalty proof against even the inquisition of family relationship. The authorship was not publicly acknowledged by Scott until 1827 at the Edinburgh Theatrical Fund Dinner; the announcement creating an extraordinary sensation throughout Europe, although the identity had been an open secret in consequence of the publishing failures in 1825, which led to the Author's financial ruin.

But why the anonymity? Scott at the dinner said: "I am willing, however, to plead *guilty* (*i.e.*, to the avowal, which was made by a Judge, Lord Meadowbank, in proposing a toast to Sir Walter), nor shall I detain the court by a long explanation why my confession has been so long deferred. Perhaps caprice might have a considerable share in the matter." And that was all. On a private occasion he was "not sure that it would be considered quite decorous for a Clerk of Session to write novels." Then he gave other reasons to his friend Morrit: that anonymity entailed less personal responsibility, and that without it he would deprive himself "of the pleasure of writing again." There was something here; but not much, for Scott knew well, and often

said, that he never could lay down the pen. Finally, in the General Preface to his Collected Works in 1829, trying to be as frank as possible, he suggested some more explanations. Among them all the most emphatic declaration is: "I am sorry I can give little satisfaction to queries on this subject. . . I can render little better reason for choosing to remain anonymous, than by saying, with Shylock, that such was my humour." When, however, he touches upon the doubts about *Waverley's* reception, it is plain that—at any rate, in the beginning—the world's darling poet wanted to test under the veil his chances of becoming its darling novelist. It is important to remember that the early chapters had been shown to a friend and critic five years earlier, and abandoned because of his unfavorable criticism. Had not the public acclaimed *Waverley* in 1814, the series of novels might never have made their comet-like sweep through English literature.

As time went by, Scott's name was frequently associated with the novels in guesses based on an extraordinary variety of conjectures. So frequently was he mentioned as a collaborator that the one point on which he was really explicit in his "confession" was that he was the "total and undivided author"—a point emphasized because of the persistence of the fantastic report that his brother Tom had a hand in the novels. There is an example of the amazing stories current at the time in an unpublished letter of Daniel Terry's: "The public have an odd story here," he writes to Scott from London, "of a lady who sent a basket of the choicest and rarest fruits with a note addressed to you as the Author of *Waverley*; and that you carefully selected half of the fruit and tore the note in two—returning the half of each to the fair Offerer, and thereby confessing yourself half entitled to the reputation of the Authorship." As a rule, when questioned by those who suspected the truth he managed very adroitly to avoid making an avowal. As a result of going through his correspondence I find that one of his methods of frustrating the awkward question was to send gifts of the novels, as soon as they appeared, accompanied by letters discussing their merits and demerits and the identity of the author. This "no-connection-with-the-business-next-door" pretence is amusing. But on occasions he went farther. There are at least two instances of Scott "calling in the Devil" and affirming "I am *not* the Author of *Waverley* nor in any way connected with these very successful novels." It is not to be wondered that he became tired of "the necessity of confuting at every corner" a story which those who believed it longed to hear

him admit and which tantalized the rest of the world. As he wrote to his friend Lady Louisa Stuart after the avowal: "I only looked for some decent opportunity to lay aside the mask, which was grown as thin as my Aunt Dinah's. Besides, the joke had lasted long enough. . . I had not, however, the most distant intention of choosing the time and place."

In these pages we have Lord Meadowbank, who was described by Sir Walter as "a kind and clever little fellow, but somewhat bustling and forward," telling Sir Robert Peel how the famous avowal came to be made. Although the first letter in the group, from Morritt, does not bear on "The Author of *Waverley*" affair, it does concern an earlier matter which showed Scott's readiness to adopt the veil of anonymity, which is rather less fashionable in literature to-day. His anonymous *Bridal of Triermain* was designedly published at the same time as the acknowledged poem *Rokeby*, chiefly as a trap for the critic Jeffrey—to see what he would say, in comparison, about the new "rival" to Scott. The letter of Morritt, who was one of the two or three persons pledged to keep the secret, shows the anxiety for the development of the plot. The cream of the joke is that, by an accident, Jeffrey of the hated "Edinburgh Review" escaped the trap, into which the "Quarterly Review"—Scott's foster-child—fell head over heels. In the second letter, Morritt is discussing the first volume of *Waverley*, which he had received almost damp from the press. The other letters from Miss Edgeworth, Dibdin the Bibliophile, Haydon the artist, and Professor Browne, afford curious and amusing sidelights on the Great Mystery—that from the famous Roxburghe Club illustrating how the etiquette of the business was observed by better-informed correspondents.

From J. B. S. Morritt

PORTLAND PLACE,
3d April, [1813].

MY DEAR SCOTT,—It is long since I heard from you, but I cannot help writing, as Miss Lydia White [1] told me yesterday the great news of your rival, the author of the *Bridal of Tremain* [i.e. *Triermain*] having published that effort of his virgin Muse. I also understand that the young bard is a great favourite of your literary Chief Justice Jeffrey, and that he has chosen this said poem as a *point*

[1] An engaging friend of Scott, who appears in the next group of letters as the teller of a truly scandalous affair.

d'appui for his critical forces in his meditated attack on *Rokeby*. Miss White is justly alarmed at the rising celebrity of this young follower of the Border Muses, and I share in her anxiety just enough to wish much for the production, if you can tell me the London publisher. He must be allowed to have great merit, where such infallible judges applaud, and I long for the review most ardently, and the *flinty-hearted curs* seem more dilatory than ever. I dare say I shall be far less provoked at the critique of your dear friend, Jeffrey, than I have been at [the] quiet stupidity of the "Quarterly," who tell your story in long windy prose, and quote some of the least prominent passages as a specimen of your book, then tell us they did not like it at first but have since changed their opinion; while no mortal but themselves can account either for their dislike or recantation. . . [1]

The great London *menagerie* of new wild animals exhibited at all the blue-stocking parties has been this year enriched by the admission of Messrs. Smith, the joint authors of *Rejected Addresses* and Miss Holford, [author of] the *Wallace*. The gentlemen seem not to thrive; they have rashly followed up their fame with the *Horace in London* poems of their own which are dull and slangish. They are exactly mock-birds, and I fear have but a bad voice of their own. The lady [Miss Holford] is quite at home. She seems to me like Miss Jenny, never strange in a strange place, and very tenacious of her supremacy. This has given rise to a most delectable feud. She was presented one evening at Sotheby's to Mrs. Siddons; and the tragic princess, being on the high ropes, returned her salute with a dignified Stage curtsey. The poetess mistook her grandeur for insolence, and rushed round the room telling everybody this great neglect and insult, with comments not very soft on the tragic Queen. Mrs. Fitzhugh, who is chief eater of toads to Mrs. Siddons, took up the cudgels, and the scene at last almost proceeded to an attack upon their caps reciprocally between this female Wallace and her South'ron foe.

Mrs. Siddons in a comedy

I wish you were here, you see by this we are not wiser, and I think not much better since you were—witness the Delicate Investigation.[2] Adieu, Mrs. M[orritt] unites in kind regards to Mrs. Scott and yourself.—Yours ever faithfully,

J. B. Morritt.

[1] The "Quarterly" so far fell into the trap that the reviewer, an old friend of Sir Walter, described *Triermain* as an imitation of Scott, some of whose productions it surpassed in elegance and beauty.

[2] *i.e.*, into the charges against Princess Caroline.

From the same July 14th, [1814].

My Dear Scott,—How the story of *Waverley* may continue in the two last volumes I am not able to divine, but as far as we have read pray let us thank you for the castle of Tully-Veolan and the delightful drinking bout at Lucky Macleary's, no less than for the character of the Laird of Balmawhapple, the Baron of Bradwardine, and Davie Gellatley who I take to be a transcript of William Rose's motley follower, commonly yclept Caliban. If the completion of the story is equal to what we have just devoured, it deserves a place amongst our standard works, far better than its modest appearance and anonymous title-page will give it as a novel in these days of prolific story-telling. I wish it was known and circulated, for honestly I can assure you it has already entertained us beyond belief. Your manner of narrating is so different from the slipshod sauntering verbiage of common novels, and from the stiff, precise and prim sententiousness of some of our female novelists that it cannot, I think, fail to strike anybody who knows what stile is, though amongst the gentle class of readers, who swallow every blue-backed book in a circulating library for the sake of the story, I should fear that half the knowledge of nature it contains and all the real Humour would be thrown away.

A private "review"

Sir Everard, Mrs. Rachel, and the Baron of Bradwardine are, I think, in the first rank of portraits for nature and character; and I could dispose to their likeness in any court of taste if Lord Cochrane had not just now put affidavits a little out of countenance. The ballad of St. Swithin and scraps of old songs were measures of danger if you meant to continue in concealment; but you wear your disguise something after the manner of our friend Bottom the weaver, and the reality will in spite of you peep out.

Perhaps I like what I have read even more than I should at any other time, because never came a kindness so gratefully and opportunely. Mrs. Morritt is really better than she has been for some time, and in the long and tedious confinement which such an illness inflicts, and the weakness which makes books of amusement the only source of her enjoyment, the keenness of pleasure which your story has given to her has communicated itself to me. She bids me express in the strongest terms how very, very much she feels obliged to you for this attempt to afford her amusement, and assure you that nothing has given her so much delight, in reading, as what we have read of this story; or, in reflecting on, as the kind friendship which prompted you to send it for her at such a time. She has gone to

bed with her head full of adventures, and I promised her to express to you how much she enjoyed them. The strings you have touched of humour and pathos depending on natural character and real life have, with few exceptions indeed, been so seldom touched that they have all the charm of novelty to us, and therefore you must not wonder that we as "strangers bid them welcome." In truth we had for her amusement read some middling novels lately which amidst the trash of the day seemed so superior that in our tolerance we had just pronounced them very excellent, and you have rescued us from that heresy by shewing us how a story should be told to deserve our eulogie. . .

Give our very kindest regards to Mrs. Scott and our young friends, and ever believe me, dear Scott, yours sincerely and affectionately,

J. B. S. MORRITT.*

From Maria Edgeworth [1]

ARDBRONCEAN PALACE,
Nov. 14, [1817].

. . . We have come here to spend a few days with one of my Father's oldest friends, the Bishop of Meath. He and his family are some of your friend Walter Scott's most enthusiastic admirers, and on this, as on many other subjects, we heartily agree. The questions whether Scott did or did not write the 3 celebrated unclaimed novels,[2] whether he wrote parts or the whole, and why he or their author does not acknowledge them, are at this moment subjects of as eager conversational discussion in Dublin and in all literary companies in Ireland as they have been in London and all over England. If the author's object by this mystery was to keep alive public curiosity and interest (in his case a very unnecessary object) he has perfectly succeeded; and he shews, even in this, thorough knowledge of human nature. Every now and then some body comes out with a new *proof-positive* on one side or the other, and upon the strength of this struts his hour and enjoys his importance in society. A certain Sir Alexander Gordon (not Cummings Gordon) has lately put an anecdote in circulation in Dublin which has done his business for the *day*—for the *fortnight*. He says he was with Walter Scott at one of his tenant's houses when exactly the scene in *The Antiquary*—of Steeney's funeral—

Rival theories

[1] This letter from the Irish novelist, subsequently a constant correspondent of Scott, was addressed to Joanna Baillie, who forwarded it to Abbotsford; hence its inclusion in the Letter-Books.

[2] *Waverley* (1814), *Guy Mannering* (1815), and *The Antiquary* (1816).

really passed, and that when afterwards the book came out and he reminded Scott of it, Scott put his fingers on his lips. To no purpose it appears! The said Sir A. avers that to his certain knowledge great part of the books are written by Tom Scott, Walter's brother; but that Walter writes all the pathetic parts. Now I have never wavered in my belief that Walter Scott wrote both the pathetic and the comic parts. I am willing to give up all that is not worth having in the books (for example, all *Guy Mannering*) to Tom or whoever chuses to have it. But I am convinced none but Walter Scott could produce the soul of the book. N.B. Please to answer that you are entirely of my opinion.

Tom Scott's part

Heaven bless those few authors who have power to snatch us from ourselves away. Scott is one of them. I have felt it strongly, and he has my love and gratitude, as well as my admiration. I wish I could hear from him once more. I have felt great pain from some criticisms I have seen of late in the Irish papers, in particular in answer to some essay taken from some Scotch paper or magazine —"The Craftsman" I think—in which a comparison between my writings and those of the Author of *Waverley* was made.[1] In answer some injudicious defender says a great deal *for* me that I wish unsaid. Nothing can hurt me more *in every way* than these invidious comparisons. All that sort of literary competition and cabal is repugnant to my nature and my habits—and to the generous precept and example of him who left me all of his spirit that he could leave.[2] The idea of entering into competition with such a superior genius as Scott never could rise in my *understanding*—and certainly not in my heart. He has, in my happier days, honoured me with his letters—my father loved them; was proud—as well he might be—of them; rejoiced in the approbation of such a man for his daughter; and many an exquisitely delightful sensation have I had in seeing him read Scott's letters to me. I believe I never was ungrateful for kindness shewn me. You may then guess by your own good heart, dear Joanna, what I have felt in reading some of these newspapers criticisms. What delight *can* people take in such things. How my father would have spurned them. [remainder not sent to Scott.]

[1] The popularity and anonymity of the Waverley Novels caused a wave of imitations, especially by women writers; and Scott's work was the standard for comparison.

[2] *i.e.*, her father, an "ingenious gentleman," as they used to say, whose desire to know the result of the 3.30 race at Newmarket led him to invent a plan for telegraphing. He was the friend of many celebrities of his time; also an author and educationalist.

From Thomas Frognall Dibdin KENSINGTON,
April 21, 1823.

My Dear Sir,—It falls to my lot to apprise you that "the Author of *Waverley*" was *elected* a Member of the Roxburghe Club on Saturday last—"with leave and permission (I like to be *technical*) for Sir Walter Scott Bart. to be his *locum tenens*, in case of the inability (by cause of distance, ill-health, or other equally efficient excuse) of the said Author of *Waverley*, to attend in his proper person."

Roxburghe Club's new member

You will now, therefore, know *exactly* what line to pursue in case of the non-attendance of that mysterious personage: and we shall in all probability consider you, when seated at our "round table," *alter et idem*—but this can only be when we are *in our cups*.

At any rate, dear Sir, be pleased to couple my hearty congratulations with those of your best friends on the felicitous result of last Saturday's ballotting when you see, or write to, the Author of *Waverley*. Come, and talk of Caxtons and Wynkyns with us at our next anniversary merry-making, the 17th June; and in shaking hands with you, we shall almost fancy we are embracing both the shadow and the *substance* of the mysterious Anonymous! *Vide* Barbiers' *Dict. des Anonymes et Pseudonymes:* Vol. 3, p. —.

The Lord have you in his good keeping! Your Bondsman, Friend, and Servant,

T. F. Dibdin.[1]

From Lord Meadowbank [1827.]

My Dear Sir Walter,—As what took place on Friday is in fact matter of History, I think you perhaps may wish to know the precise import of what I wrote Peel, knowing the intense interest he takes in everything in which you are concerned.

After mentioning the Dinner, I told him that after going to the rooms I was informed by the Stewards that it was wished that I should return thanks for The Patrons, on that toast being given by one of the Performers, and that I should conclude by proposing y^r^. health. That when you came I mentioned to you the notice which had been given me, adding that I presumed there was now no occasion for dealing in mystification about the Great Unknown: and that I understood you to assent to my considering myself at liberty on that subject.

This explanation I told him I thought it right to give him to

[1] The bibliophile, whose reputation now rests more on sentiment than on success, his works not being distinguished by that accuracy which modern bibliography requires.

prevent his supposing—on the one hand, that the *Coup-de-Théâtre* was got up and that I had been so highly honoured as to be selected as the instrument for bringing *this* dénouement forward; or that, on the other, I had acted so impertinently as to say what I did—and most inadequate I found it then, and still more now, to the occasion—without some previous communication with you.—I remain, my dear Sir Walter, yours most faithfully,

A. Maconochie.

From B. R. Haydon

London,
Feb. 27, 1827.

My Dear Sir Walter,—We have got you at last! I had you, some years ago. The very day I dined with you, you asked where I had been. I told you on the Salisbury Crags! "Ah," said you; "Mr. Haydon, when I was young, I used to sit on the Salisbury Crags, and meditate on my prospects in life! But those days are past" &c. I thought to myself, surely in the *Midlothian* there is some sentiment of that sort by the Author. As soon as I got home the next day, I sent to a Library, and got the Novel; and there found the very same sentiment *by the Author*: a Robber escapes from the Mob, and gets to the Salisbury Crags. This was collateral evidence. One of your stories, showing the same power of individual description, the same exquisite touching of the leading characteristics of each character you talked of, was enough to any man of common thinking; and I said to Miss Mitford,[1] in a letter that evening, if you denied it on your death-bed I should say you were mistaken. I regret excessively I was not present, and I do think without exaggeration I would have come down, had I known it before hand.[2]

Miss Mitford given a clue

It will make a great noise all over the World, but it will make no difference in the genius of the Novels. Mrs. Siddons preferred the *Heart of Midlothian*, and I heard her say in her sonorous [? Ceres] sort of voice—like a "Mother of the Gods" in private—that your making Jeannie Deans interesting without personal beauty or youth was an instance of powers unexampled. This Novel is my favourite, and ever will be. Long may you live, my dear Sir Walter, with all my heart, and long may you enjoy those congratulations which will be showered on you from all quarters of the Earth.—I am, with the greatest respect, yours faithfully, B. R. Haydon.

[1] The author of *Our Village* was one of "my truest and kindest friends. God bless her warm heart!" says Haydon in his Autobiography.

[2] He means, at the Theatrical Fund Dinner, when the veil was withdrawn.

From Prof. G. A. Browne TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE,
March 1st, 1829.

SIR,—You can probably have very little recollection of my name tho' perhaps you have not forgotten the circumstance which occasioned my being honour'd with a letter from you. That circumstance was the Present of a copy of Professor Porson's *Adversaria* from Trinity College to you. The letter of acknowledgement which you sent contained some very civil expressions towards myself, and a very interesting disclaiming of certain Novels. That letter is now before me; and it is in consequence of what lately passed at the Edinburgh Theatrical dinner, that I venture to take up your time at the present moment. Two Fellows of my own College, one a Scotsman, Mr. Hamilton, brother to the M.D. at Edinbro', laid a wager of a rump and dozen [1] some ten or twelve years ago, when *Guy Mannering* was published, concerning the *Author*. At that time they were Under-graduates, now they are distinguished members of our Society. About three weeks ago Mr. Higman, the other party in the bet, allowed to Mr. H. that he had lost the wager, and Tuesday last was then fix'd for the day of payment. By an extraordinary coincidence, the first news of what passed at the Edinburgh dinner arrived in Cambridge on that very day. I thought it [would] amuse you to hear of this fact, and I have ventur'd to send you also a Cambridge Paper in which you will perceive a paragraph relative to it. Our dinner at Mr. Higman's was very splendid, and amongst the large Party who enthusiastically toasted the Author of *Waverley*, no one seemed to feel more powerfully and to acknowledge more strongly the transcendent genius of the Scottish Novelist than our Lucasian Professor of Mathematics, the celebrated Mr. Airey, who is now seated in the Chair which once was Newton's. I am afraid you will think me very impertinent in thus presuming to address you; but perhaps you will pardon it as arising from a principle of gratitude towards one who has so often contributed to beguile, delight, and instruct our [hours] of leisure.—Yours most truly,

Cambridge bet sequel

G. A. BROWNE.

[1] *i.e.*, a rump of beef and a dozen of claret—a common prize for wagers in the days of the three-bottle men.

MARRIAGE AND SCANDAL *À-LA-MODE*

From Miss Lydia White	Mrs. Bashford and her Don Juan.
Mrs. Jane Apreece	Sir Humphry Davy in Danger.
C. K. Sharpe	Secret Family History.
Joanna Baillie	A Dragoon Dragooned.
J. B. S. Morritt	His Nephew's low Love Affair.
William Sharp	Maid, Mistress, Wife, and Widow before 17.
Lady Abercorn	Mrs. Coutts and the Duke of St. Albans.
Sir John Sinclair	Private and Confidential.
John Sinclair	A Delicate Subject.

MARRIAGE AND SCANDAL *À-LA-MODE*

THE letters in this group are "all about marriages and things," as the schoolboy said of the Book of Genesis. This volume would not be representative of Sir Walter Scott's Letter-Books without them. Rather less would it afford a picture of his time, when the conventions of marriage were more circumscribed than now; and when "a female friend" (here is Joanna Baillie, the dramatist, in the role) accompanied bride and bridegroom on the honeymoon—an obsolete custom which must have been productive of many curious predicaments and adventures. Those were the days when they married early, to gain experience at leisure. The twentieth-century fashion is to gain the experience early, and marry at leisure. Logically the Divorce Courts should not be doing such a roaring business. But Logic flies through the window when Divorce stalks in through the hotel door. Scott was very much the society man in his concern about the matrimonial projects of his friends. And there is ample reason for one's conjecture that he was at least equally interested in the other delicate matters, which were referred to him as to some oracle. Those were the days also when there was much exaggerated belief that poets and novelists must necessarily be very experienced in affairs of love and passion to "write like that" about them. True, there was plenty of fertile soil for contemporary propagation of the belief. Every indiscretion celebrated by Byron's muse bred a dozen scandalous offspring to be fathered upon the poet. Scott, who believed that the Don embellished his own amours considerably, and that he was *le fanfaron de vices qu'il n'avoit pas*, did not "write like that." But he also was unlucky in love; and it is a reasoned conjecture that the hero-worship which was his offered at least as many allurements as did that of Byron. The difference between the two men was that Scott exercised the restraint which he speaks of in a letter to Joanna Baillie about his friend and fellow-poet: "It is a cruel pity that such high talents should have been joined to a mind so wayward and incapable of seeking control where alone it is to be found, in the quiet discharge of domestic duties and filling up in peace and affection

his station in Society." Could Byron have given—as he said he was prepared to give—all his fame, everything, for the domestic happiness of his friend, he would have lost in the gamble, as he usually did. Although it is true that Scott made his domestic peace, his was the heart which had been broken for two years for love of the fair Williamina ; and, though it was handsomely pieced again, the crack remained " till his dying day." In the group of letters following this one we shall see how he was drawn even more explicitly on this tender subject.

Meanwhile, here, to begin with, is Miss Lydia White—one of his fair friends whom he liked, and described as " a lioness of the first order, with stockings nineteen times nine dyed blue, very lively, very good-humoured." This rouged and jesting ruler of Mayfair is too typically affected in the telling of her scandalous story to be convincing ; although her comments on the *Memoirs* of Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke afford a topical side-light on the feminine question and the activities of royal mistresses such as this " attractive baggage," as a biographer has described her. The next correspondent, for the moment Mrs. Apreece, was a wealthy and distant relative of Scott ; and was an even greater lion-catcher than Lydia, once having the desperate courage to make a fling at that dangerous quarry—Byron. The crowning triumph of this very merry widow must be left to a footnote, in order not to anticipate her letter. There follows her a merry bachelor—our friend Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe again—in another letter revealing how he had all the naughty skeletons of the aristocracy in his library. The palpitating news from Joanna Baillie, apart from the inevitable Byroniana, is an object lesson in the gentle art of Dragooning. Scott's bosom friend Morritt writes in something of the fine agony of the Baronet of Raynham Abbey in Meredith's *Ordeal of Richard Feverel.* Two more cameos, and our matrimonial columns end with the extraordinary efforts to remarry Scott himself. It only needs to be said now that the efforts were unflatteringly rejected ; and that the fact of the two correspondents having the same name is only coincidence. There is no reason for assuming that match-making was the exclusive occupation of the Sinclairs of Scotland.

From Miss Lydia White [28, GLOUCESTER STREET],
[December, 1810].

MY DEAR MR. SCOTT,—I should not at this moment think of troubling you with a letter *à propos de rien* if it were not to prepare

you for poor Mr. Bashford's misfortunes in case he should arrive. Tho' he certainly has—as the Frenchman told the Prince of Wales—"*some fish to fry*" which may prevent his going to Scotland this year. How shall I ever be able to tell you what has happened. I declare solemnly I am ashamed of my troop—ashamed to find I have been in such company. In a word Mrs. B— is fairly gone astray, and was found by her Husband at 2 o'clock in the morning in the Room of a College lad who I left in the house when I came away from [? the dance.] He escaped out of the window (from the poker which was levell'd at him) in a most unaccommodated state; and my friend, Henry Tighe, was deputed to convey the disgraced Lady to Dublin where he delivered her over to Mr. Bashford's attorney, who transported her to Wales, where I understand she now remains, and will, I conclude, revisit the Glimpses of the Moon only on Doctors' Commons. What a dereliction! What a Husband! What a situation! What a Child she has lost—sacrificed! The Hero is a mere giggling boy whom I could not have conversed with five minutes. I cannot bear the idea of having lived a week in the house with these people, of having as it were assisted at such a scene. I am afraid to think what I have done, "look on't again I dare not."[1] I have but one consolation: this Lady certainly was very unworthy of Mr. B— he may now be released from her, and obtain a Woman who knows how to value his superior talents and accomplishments.

Mrs. Bashford —and child

I can assure you I am by no means indifferent to the advantages of returning once more to old England, and yet in some points I scarcely recognise it. It is noticeable to mark the Brochures which have been published on any of the remarkable events which have occurred during my absence. I open Mrs. Clark[e]'s *Life.*[2] I read: "Chastity is deemed an exalted female Virtue; without it a Woman is degraded and worthless &c. Every man is willing to subscribe to this in Theory, but it is continually opposed by *practical contradiction* for we daily find Women whose incontinence has been the most glaring and disgusting to manly delicacy commanding the admiration and constituting the *felicity* of *the most exalted character.* We are then very gravely told that *this is a consideration not to be passed over lightly*; and after some other sage remarks we are

[1] This exclamation of Lady Macbeth occurs repeatedly in the Letter-Books. It seems to have been the favourite expression to indicate blushing modesty, having been made fashionable, doubtless, by Mrs. Siddons.

[2] *i.e., The Authentic Memoirs of Mrs. Clarke,* by "Miss Elizabeth Taylor" (1809). The "quotation" is really a paraphrase of the opening of the *Memoirs*; but is fairly enough done.

assured that whilst frigid unalluring chastity—cold conjugal fidelity—sits moping in neglect and solitude unable to fix the faithless wanderer, the fascinating *prostitute* waves her wand like a Sorceress, draws him within the magic circle of pleasure, and moral duty, domestic affection, with every tie that cements Society is swallowed up in sensual indulgence."

Mrs. Clarke example

Now all this is very edifying—tis true, tis pity, and pity tis true ; but when we consider that this is offered to our consideration by Miss Taylor, whom we were not allowed to laugh at as a Governess to young ladies tho' the friend of Mrs. Clarke, who the House of Commons protected and subscribed to support,[1] it cannot fail to influence the rising generation of females in these days who doubtless will be more anxious to constitute the felicity of exalted character than to fulfill those cold ineffectual moping duties of which we formerly used to have so much and of which, I am sorry to say, we now see so very little. What say you to Lady Paget's marriage ? What a fine country yours is which not only facilitates the means of uniting juvenile lovers in holy Wedlock ? but also affords them means by which they may be released from their bondage. . . Believe me ever your obliged and faithful,

L[ydia] W[hite].

From Mrs. Jane Apreece

NO. 16, BERKELEY SQUARE,
Monday, March 4th [1811].

I AM told by every one, my dear Mr. Scott, that you are soon to be in London, yet Miss White's account of a new store of Wardrobe apparel just on the eve of departure for you argues some delay, perhaps doubt, respecting the glad Tidings. I know Mrs. Scott's Mantua-maker can make by pattern, but your Taylor is, I hope, a more clumsy artificer, and that the *professa persona* must be measured and seen before any Coat fit for you can be put forth from his Board. Tell Mrs. Scott to be dainty for you, and bring you up *par force* for this and better purposes, the enjoyment of your friends and the gratification of Society. The illustrious on this side the Tweed have not your hilarity, and mickle-mouthed Damsels afford no amusement. Davy is remarkably pleasant, and all the fashion and celebrity of admiration do not injure his unaffectedness. It is said a more dangerous Power in the sprightly form of an Irish Peeress

[1] Mrs. Clarke was the mistress of Frederick, Duke of York ; and the scandal consequent on the " connexion " led to a House of Commons inquiry. For some diverting pages about the couple the curious reader should turn to F. J. Huddleston's *Warriors in Undress*.

may probably burn some of his combustible matter or at least singe, if not scarify, his heart.[1] I hear that you write *so many* letters, half the Town vaunts itself of your signature ; in this new taste I am sorry, not from vanity but regard to be left unremembered. Do let me hear how you all are ? not omitting Wallace, who is certainly associated in most pleasing recollections. Are we to go to Portugal with you ? I shall put the question to your friend Miss Baillie on Thursday next, when I am to meet her at the Barry's and when I am determined to hear her speak, by speaking of you. I have got a very comfortable house, and most eligibly situated. It is so centrical I shall expect my fair share of you and Mrs. Scott, for I know kind intentions in London scarcely resist the inconvenience of remote or distant situation. I like Scotland too well to be a runaway from it by choice, and I live in the pleasurable hope of again going there ere it be very long. I at this period of the expectation offer another visit to Ashestials where the reception and entertainment cannot be forgotten. Remember me kindly to Mrs. Scott and to your four supporters—and believe me truly, your faithfull obliged,

JANE APREECE.

From Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe

Friday Morning, [June, 1812].

MY DEAR SCOTT,—Will you be so good as to transmit me, *per* bearer, *The Gabions of Perth* and, if you possess such a thing, *Lady Culross's Dream.* I will not, on the honour of a Borderer, detain them as long as the last book you lent me. I have written to Lord Worcester this morning about Swift's and the Duchess of Ormond's Letters, and if they really do remain in the Duke of Beaufort's hands, I can answer for the success of my application. That b——h Lady Castlereagh ! You should claw her off soundly in a note or in the preface, were it only on account of the common cause of letters.[2]

[1] After taking " the blue line," Mrs. Apreece visited Edinburgh and " studied the Northern Lights," as Scott says, several of them being instantly attracted, but repelled owing to age or other disqualifications. The wealthy widow triumphed over the Irish Peeress in the matrimonial stakes ; and secured that famous lion, Sir Humphry Davy, the inventor of the miners' safety-lamp. Of the many squibs she evoked at the time is this one :

Too many men have often seen
Their talents underrated ;
But Davy owns that his have been
Duly Appreeciated.

[2] Scott is presently working on his *Life of Swift.* Byron attacked Lord Castlereagh, but there is mystery about this set against the statesman's beautiful wife. A family tradition has it that at Vienna she wore the *honi soit qui mal y pense* of the Garter as a headdress—but this is another story, unrelated to Sharpe's gentle suggestion to Scott.

Since an illness I had about a year and a half ago, I have (and it is a sad annoyance to me) perceived that my memory, which was never good, is much impaired, so I have always forgot to mention that I possess a pamphlet published, as I think, by Curll, containing forged letters of Swift and Lady Betty Berkeley, which that Lady mentioned in one of her genuine letters to the Dean. It is at Hoddam Castle, and when this family goes there you shall have it, if it can be of service. The Margravine of Anspach told me that she remembered her Aunt, Lady Betty, very well. She could never have been pretty, and was little, with a surprising portion of wit and vivacity, the overstrained good breeding of the old court. She was the soul of a society composed of many distinguished persons. Her niece added (but this is a secret) that she lived in the *strictest intimacy* with the Duke of Dorset; and that with the connivance of the Duchess, who actually pretended to be with child, and to be delivered of that youth whom Lady Betty herself had by the Duke, and to whom she left all her fortune. Her money she got from her husband Sir John Jermyn, originally a Dutch Merchant and a gambler.[1] More beautiful than an Angel, and sillier than one of Fox's *Saints*, the Duchess of Norfolk (Lady Mary Mordaunt, I think) was divorced for him, and left him all the Peterborough jewels, plate, &c. &c. You know the Strawberry Hill stories about Sir John's ignorance, so I need not tattle them here. Pray don't take the trouble to answer this (except with the *Gabions*), and believe me ever, my dear Scott,—Most sincerely yours,

Lady Berkeley's secret

[unsigned, as were many of Sharpe's letters]*

From Joanna Baillie [2]

HAMPSTEAD,
July 2d, 1816.

My Dear Friend,—I know you are truly interested in what concerns my happiness, and I am going to tell you of an event in our family which is very soon expected to take place, that very deeply concerns us all, and has one way or another agitated our minds very much for these some months past. My Niece is going to be

[1] This secret history comes with authority, for the Margravine, a daughter of Lord Berkeley, was the intimate friend of Sharpe. Lady Betty Berkeley—to whose father Swift was chaplain—became the second wife of Sir John Germain (not Jermyn), who on his deathbed (1718) "expressed the wish that she would marry a young man and have children to succeed to her wealth, but hoped that otherwise it might pass to a younger son of Lionel, Duke of Dorset." Hence the sequel.

[2] The correspondence between Scott and Miss Baillie was voluminous and affectionate. He thought as highly of her character as of her plays and poems.

married ; and tho' she has chosen a very worthy young man, whose family we have long known and highly respected, yet our anxiety for her happiness has been very great, perhaps unreasonably so, and I would not live the last April and May over again for a great hire. She is a very clever woman, fond of books, and with a mind and taste well cultivated ; he is a plain, honest soldier, whose education had been quite neglected and who, dogs and horses and military matters excepted, has little information on any subject. This being the case, you may believe we had all of us many discouraging thoughts in regard to her future happiness, and her poor Mother above all has been very anxious ; but the young man himself has behaved under some very trying circumstances and throughout the whole of the affair, with so much sense and delicacy and sweetness of temper and forbearance, that we now, thank God ! begin to hope with some confidence that she will really be happy. You will wish them all good, I know, when I tell you that he was one of our brave Dragoons at Waterloo, where he was what was called severely wounded. He is to remain in the army, and hopes soon to get into the Guards which are never ordered abroad but on actual service. He has a good moderate fortune, and being admirably fitted both in mind and body for a Soldier, it is the best plan. His name is Milligan, and it was a sister of his who sat next you when you last dined with us at Hampstead. You may have forgotten her ; indeed, but she will never forget having sat by you. I believe this same wedding will take place next week. And a thing is to follow this marriage (at least is intended to do so) which I think you will rather be pleased with ; a most unlooked for thing, I am sure, to me. I am going abroad with the new-married pair and my nephew William, to spend some weeks and see part of Switzerland and Geneva. They all pretend that I will be of use to them, and do not shrink from having an old Aunt to over-look them ; and, as they are all thoroughly good-natured and, I believe, truly attached to me, I do not shrink from the undertaking. . . But I must tell you that our soldier, tho' scantily provided with book learning, observes accurately and well the face of nature, and he shall make his début in poetry with your works which I think he is fitted to enjoy truly. If he does not, however, I will *truly* know, for he is quite honest and affects nothing.

A honeymoon escort

I had a letter from Miss Edgeworth about a fortnight ago, full of praise of *The Antiquary* which she rather prefers to *Guy Mannering*. She thinks there is but one person in the world able

to write such works, and therefore they must be his. It is indeed rich in characters and in original pictures of human nature; but I know not how to give it a preference to the others. My admiration of Meg Merrilies and my love for Dandy Dinmont being great; besides that, the story of *Guy Mannering* is more uniformly animated and entertaining. I had a letter, likewise, a very short time ago from poor Lady Byron.[1] She says that when she returned to her Father's she found her health more injured by her last residence in Town and the great anxiety she had suffered than she expected, and had therefore gone to the seaside at Lostoff with her child. Poor thing! she comforts herself with thinking that, had she not married Lord B. and he become ruined and abandoned afterwards, as he would certainly have done, she would have upbraided herself for not endeavouring to save him and would probably have been more miserable than she is. It is a good thing that she views it in this light. I suppose you have read Lady C. Lamb's book. It is not without some ability, yet I doubt whether I should have had patience to read it if my curiosity had not been excited by believing the characters to be taken from real life. Her *outré* fantastical loves and sentiments are like the ravings of a crazy person. She insinuates that Lord Byron took great pains to win her love; but I have always been informed that it was quite the reverse, and that he always shunned her, and repressed her advances.[2]

Byron and Caroline Lamb

I have seen Mrs. Siddons act again in the character of Queen Catherine. Her expression of face and dignity of action seemed to me as great as ever. Time has spared her wonderfully. I have not yet seen the new tragedy *Bertram* which I regret [3]; but as it is so well received, it will no doubt be acted next, and if I live I shall have my opportunity still. I have read it and think it very finely written, but I neither like the characters nor the story. It was said, when it first came out, that the author had sent the

[1] Scott had written to Miss B. of "the good intelligence" of the separation between the poet and his wife: "Lord Byron is the object of anything rather than indignation."

[2] The book is *Glenarvon*, published anonymously, though immediately known to be by Lady Caroline Lamb, one of Byron's passionate adorers (Disraeli in his *Venetia* even used the gossip about her visiting the poet's rooms disguised as a page). *Glenarvon* is the first—though almost the worst—novel written round Byron. One of its chief interests is that the secret of Glenarvon (*i.e.*, Byron) is that he was a murderer—an example of the many fantastic rumours about the poet, and one to which even Goethe gave credence. The title of the novel, which had a great sale, was changed in 1865 to *The Fatal Passion*.

[3] By the Rev. Charles Maturin, a poor young Irish clergyman, who was helped by both Byron and Scott. Thanks to Kean's acting, *Bertram* brought its author £1,000.

MS. to you and you had recommended it to Drury Lane; but this I suppose is false. I hope you and yours are well. Give my kind regard to Mrs. Scott, and my love to my young friend Sophia . . . Affectionately yours,

J. Baillie.

From J. B. S. Morritt

GAFFNELS,
Thursday [? April, 1821].

My Dear Friend,—I want your advice and assistance, and have much regretted your departure, which will make it necessary for me to write on a subject painful to me in the extreme but in which your practical and sound judgment, no less than your friendly interest in my welfare, may materially assist me. The folly and madness of our young men in forming low connexions, which have lately degraded so many of our most respectable families, have—I grieve to say—threatened mine also in spite of all my care and affection; and I have now to preserve my nephew, if possible, from a low love affair which I thought at an end, but in which I find he had only deceived me with a dishonourable hypocrisy of which I will still on any other subject believe him incapable. I had suffered great uneasiness last year by discovering that during his residence with a tutor at Buckden, previous to his admission at the University, he had been mad enough to form an attachment, with what are called *honorable* views, the object of which was a smart girl of 17, daughter to a low tradesman in the town. This *engouement* had led him into the still more fatal and disgraceful society of some of her blackguard connections, and at 17 he was in danger of all the blackguard arts of this gang, working on his passions and inexperience. His conduct did not come to my knowledge till after his removal, and a long illness and residence with me, which seemed to revive his better feelings, made me consider the danger as at an end. We had many painful discussions on the subject, but his apparent ingenuousness and his promises of future conduct removed my displeasure and almost my suspicions; and, instead of sending him abroad, my own altered health, and the prospect of effacing unworthy impressions by the kindness and affection of his family induced me to trust him with his own fate at Cambridge. I last week discovered that the same low connexion has been renewed, to the forfeiture of his pledged word, and marking by the circumstances either a weakness of character on which no reliance can be placed, or a determined system of deceit and duplicity

Our young men's madness

in which he has persevered unmoved by the distress of all who loved him most and to the sacrifice of every honourable feeling of gratitude and domestic happiness. I must save him from his own infatuation by moving him from Cambridge, but an object much more important remains for me to compass in restoring him to his senses and to a due feeling of what he owes to himself and his family. . .

Every consideration of affection and kindness has failed in forming his character to truth and honour; but the certainty of my displeasure, and the experience of its consequences may yet occasion such a shock to his feelings as will induce him to regain by submission and good conduct the place which he has forfeited.

His heir's last chance

I wish, therefore, to place him, not as my eldest son, or as my heir, but as the son of a younger brother destined for a future profession, and on a very moderate allowance, dependent even for that on his good conduct in some quiet place, where he can, if he chooses, live with gentlemen of character and respectability, and form a character for himself while he pursues studies compatible with his time of life. Should he, after all, turn out a blackguard, he will remain for life a mere annuitant and continue in obscurity, for I shall in that case leave my fortune to my surviving brothers and their family, where I can hope it will not be disgraced. But if (as I hope, and almost expect) his own better genius will, under this adversity, do for him, what I have in vain attempted by milder remonstrances, I shall be too happy to restore him when he is worthy of it to a favour of which he does not, it seems, appreciate the value. You can tell me of two places which have occurred to me as desirable residences for a lad under such circumstances. Could he not pursue his studies either at Aberdeen or St. Andrews? and could he not be lodged and boarded there in some respectable family where, without the ostensible control of a tutor, for which he is too old and too cunning, I could still expect to leave the bias of his disposition, and the progress of his conduct so as to judge of the impression made on him by the consequences which it has incurred? . .

I hear the society of Aberdeen spoken of as better for my purpose than that of St. Andrews. I wish you would write to me fully whatever suggests itself to you on this subject. . . You will relieve my mind from much uncertainty, and, painful as the subject is, pray let it rest between ourselves, and do not mention what I have told you to any person. My wishes for this unfortunate lad are most ardent, and my intentions most kind. He must be saved, if I can, but if all I can do should fail in making him a gentleman,

I must recollect that my father, in leaving his whole property unfettered by any settlement, expressly declared that he did it because he could depend on me implicitly, that I never would suffer it to descend into unworthy hands. He knows this, but is so infatuated that he must be made to feel it. He is just 19 years old, and there is perhaps yet time for the lesson to operate before he is irrevocably lost. . .[1] May happiness attend you,—and believe me, ever most gratefully and affectionately yours,

J. B. Morritt.

From William Sharp

39, GOODGE ST., LONDON,
Jany. 17, 1822.

Sir,—I possibly ought to apologize for writing you the following facts, having no other knowledge of you than Public Fame.[2]

Being a student of the Fine Arts, as an Historical Painter, I was at the Royal Academy, when a son of Mr. Bone R.A. came in and related a story of a runaway match. I said I could relate one more curious. At Portsmouth about ten years back, a young lady eloped from her parents, and fortunately went to some friends at Emsworth, about twelve miles off, who prudently returned her, which occasioned an enquiry of how the assignation was made and with whom. A Brigadier-Major was the Aide-de-Camp to the Deputy Governor: it appeared they became acquainted on the walls of the Town. He used to walk on the opposite sides of the way, making signs which she answered from the Garret window; and the maid servant was letter-carrier. About a fortnight after the elopement they planned things differently, and came up to Town together. Her father, a respectable man, who as Mayor of the Town has since been Knighted, applied to the General, who immediately sent up to London, stopping his [the officer's] promotion unless he married the lass. He was obliged to do it, but immediately started for Spain, where, in the first engagement, he was either killed or destroyed himself. Thus the Girl was a Maid, Mistress, Wife, and Widow before 17. After some short time she went over to the Isle of Wight, and became acquainted with a Marine Lieutenant who commanded a signal Post, with an Officer under him. He induced her to marry him, and the officer to give her away: she

An elopement

[1] A Scottish University appears to have done the business for this "amiable and clever youth," as Scott described him; for four years later the wealthy uncle is reporting that "our intercourse reassumes its natural tone," and that he has now "little fear of his nephew's future destiny." But, like Richard Feverel, he died young.

[2] Sir Walter surely had more "copy" sent him by admirers than any other author. There are other curious examples later for the reader.

came home, and said: "Mother, I have done a very foolish thing, I have married a Lieutenant of Marines." Of course, surprise &c. was the consequence. This Lieutenant proved jealous of his friend-in-need, [and] a duel ensued in which the husband was killed. Thus before 18 she was again a Widow. Before she attained her 20th year she again married, to a farmer near Emsworth, and I believe is now a good wife and mother. She had no children by the two first. The relation appeared so extraordinary that it was agreed to be fit for a novel, and was told I had better send it to you. I have therefore taken that liberty, begging you not to mention the place as the family are living.—Your most obedt and very humble servant,

WM. SHARP.

From Lady Abercorn

[1826.]

MY DEAREST FRIEND,—It would hardly be supposed that having so much pleasure in communication with you, I should leave a letter of yours so long without thanking you for it. . . Our friend Mrs. Coutts seems to intend to remain without a Master. If she does I shall say she is a very sensible woman. She must be aware that if she was Mrs. Coutts with a few hundreds the D[uke] of St. A[lbans] would not have thought of her—not that I mean to insinuate that she is not a most excellent person and a very good-looking Woman. I heard poor Kemble say that when she was on the stage he never knew anything against her conduct. But she is so much older than him and out of his line. I hear he is a very weak young man [to] be of age for six years, and the D[uke] of H[amilton] may take some step that will finally make it impossible. . .[1]—Ever your most attached friend,

Mrs. Coutts

A. ABERCORN.

From Sir John Sinclair

Cailsfield, Ayrshire,
11 September, 1826.

Private and Confidential.

MY DEAR SIR,—Lady Sinclair and I are now on an excursion to visit my three married daughters, who are all settled *in the West*—Lady Colquhoun, Lady Glasgow, and recently, Mrs. Stewart of Physgill and Glasserton. . .

[1] But he did not; and the millionaire banker's widow, once a poor actress, with hardly a friend, entered the peerage—setting a precedent to be followed with far less dignity towards the end of the century. "What a strange eventful life has mine been!" she wrote to Scott, who was very gallant to her when Society was snubbing her right and left.

My daughter Mrs. Stewart was married on the 10th of August; and, from a great intimacy and friendship which subsists between the two families, the Duchess of Roxburgh was prevailed upon to remain for some days longer than she had intended at Trinity Lodge, near Edinburgh, to witness the ceremony. From various circumstances I am convinced that the Duchess would have no objection once more to go through the same ceremony herself. Indeed, I think that she ought to marry (for so young and rich a widow, while she remains single, is very awkwardly situated); and I can see no reason if a Countess Dowager of Warwick married an author, Mr. Addison, *why the Duchess Dowager of Roxburgh should not marry Sir Walter Scott?* She is really a most valuable woman, and would make any man happy who had the good fortune to obtain her hand. I have no doubt, also, that you would not only make her a most excellent husband, but that you would be of great use to her son, the young Duke, by the system of Education that you would recommend to his guardians, and the advice you would give to himself.

Example of Addison

If you approve of this hint, the plan I would propose is this: We shall leave Glasserton on the 22d September, and expect to be at Fleurs on the 25th or 26th. As soon as we arrive, I shall propose that my daughter Margaret and I shall go to breakfast at Abbotsford, and that the Duchess shall authorise us to request Miss Scott and you to return with us to Fleurs that you and I may discuss literary matters together, and it may be so managed, in so quiet a way, that it is not likely to be talked off. I hope, therefore, that you will not think of leaving Abbotsford until you hear from me at Fleurs. You will soon be able to ascertain, if you go there, whether you can, with proper feelings, make the proposal, and whether you are likely to be acceptable.

On the whole I am in great hopes, *as a friend to both parties*, that the plan may be accomplished.—With best wishes, I remain, my dear Sir Walter, very faithfully yours,

JOHN SINCLAIR.[1]

[Scott, whose wife had not been dead four months, endorsed this letter as follows:]

Sir J. Sinclair. This is too impertinent, but may be kept to show how folly and vanity can dance jigs in an empty pate.

[1] The Baronet, sometime President of the Board of Agriculture, replied all unabashed to Scott's doubtless pretty plain refusal: "Excuse me for saying that in one respect you are quite 'a Hannibal' . . . With the possession of much wealth, what might not a great mind like yours accomplish."

From the Rev. John Sinclair 133, GEORGE STREET, EDINBURGH,
18th July, 1830.

Private.

MY DEAR SIR,—I trust you will pardon me the liberty I take in addressing you on a subject of painful interest to myself and of so delicate a nature that nothing could induce me to take up my pen but the necessity of the case and my confidence in your honorable and friendly feelings. In consequence of circumstances needless to be enlarged upon, my Eldest Sister has been led to believe that you have for some time entertained sentiments of attachment towards her, and has been even able to persuade herself, by dwelling long and anxiously on the subject, that you have expressed yourself on several occasions in a manner calculated to confirm those views. The idea, I am perfectly convinced, is altogether groundless, and my Sisters have endeavoured to persuade her that it is so ; but the delusion has taken such possession of her mind that all their efforts have been in vain. She persuades herself that various circumstances have at different periods prevented you from being more explicit, and, latterly, that the conduct of my brothers, or of myself, has unfortunately given you offence. I have pointed out to her that we have always felt gratified by your notice, and have too much admiration for an Individual so distinguished to shew in any instance other feelings than those of kindness and respect. But I have not been more successful than my Sisters ; and I add, with deepest humiliation and regret, that this groundless fancy is now so firmly rooted in her mind that she had, in private, actually written you a letter, which I was fortunate enough to discover and intercept. This extraordinary step has compelled me, with much reluctance, to address you, in the hope that you will favor me with a few lines which happily may open her eyes, and prevent all further uneasiness, either to this family or to yourself. Let me again intreat that you will regard this communication with indulgence, and believe me always,—With every sentiment of esteem, My dear Sir, your very faithful and obedient Servant,

An intercepted letter

JOHN SINCLAIR.[1]

[1] There is a veiled reference to this other Sinclair proposal in Scott's Journal :— " The party is a woman of rank ; so far my vanity may be satisfied. The Lord deliver me. I excused myself with little picking upon the terms."

A COMEDY OF DEDICATIONS

Letters from The Marchioness of Abercorn

A COMEDY OF DEDICATIONS

Some of the long letters of the 18th and 19th centuries meander elusively through pages which end on end extend to a dozen feet or more. Sir Walter Scott's Letter-Books, of course, have their share of these—and there they may rest for all the printers' devils in creation ; but the endurance of garrulity and pontification are only the cost of reaping in the records of those ages whose letter-writers yielded the richest harvest to English literature ; and the price is mainly paid by weary-eyed editors. The short letter is, universally, more annoying. It may have deep import, and suppress so much. Incidentally, the briefest example I have ever heard of was that of an illiterate but ardent Shropshire lass, who, desired by her swain to let him know whether she would marry him, drew on paper a crude eye, and pinned after it a piece of wool.

Here in three letters—two of them imperiously brief—is a little comedy, with something near a tragedy tacked on. They are unlike any other letters among the Abbotsford MSS. But then, if we adopt the view of that revered and mellowed man of letters, Professor Saintsbury, the writer of them must have been to Scott unlike any of his other fair correspondents. Professor Saintsbury has said that, of letters in which " the actual amatory element is present but as it were under-current, like blood that flushes a cheek but does not show outside it," some of the best examples are those of Scott to the Marchioness of Abercorn. These have long since been given to the world, as have also his letters to other ladies—written no less intimately and with his characteristic affection, however absent the actual amatory element. That was Scott's way : the radiance of his warm heart and the fervours of his loyalties. And he being the poet and novelist of chivalry, there was, as here revealed, all the jealousy among the noble dames of his circle for the favours of his pen. But no one scolded him for tardiness as Lady Abercorn did—thus : " I would have bet all I possess when we parted last in Stratford Place that I should have had constant letters from you, yet three years are gone over and three letters have I received. Is this like the friend of my heart ? " And again : " If you did not neglect me so much, I shou'd love you much more." No one could have countered more gallantly than Sir Walter. The truth of the

matter is that this " dearest friend " and the others came off very handsomely letter for letter, apart from the tributes of his books—which is the chief concern of these three letters.

The day was gone by, happily, when authors drew their rewards from Dedication fees, to swell which they were wont to flatter as many patrons as they could find room in their works for Dedicatory Odes to.[1] Since Dr. Johnson ceased selling his classic prose as dedications for smaller men's wares, the business had gradually slumped. Authors were beginning to receive their dues in a more decent way. But something of the old ideas persisted ; and peers still looked for the compliment of a dedication. From a man of the genius of Scott it was as another jewel in their coronets. Nor did they look in vain. Scott, who loved the old lords as proudly as he boasted his own quarters and emblazonments, punctiliously distributed his dedications, with a flourish which has now gone out of fashion. The joke was with him, however, when Lady Abercorn frowned disapproval on his *Life* of Swift—as her succeeding letter shows.

From the Marchioness of Abercorn

[March 1808.]

I have received your second *Marmion*, my dear good friend, and I have to give you Maria's thanks for one of them.

I was not a little angry at hearing that Lady Holland had seen *Marmion* before me ; and as I am sure you never sent it to her, I shou'd be curious to know how she could have got it. Try to find out, but do not let my name be mentioned.[2]

I have read it over once, and shall return to it again when Lord Abercorn has finished it. I think your battle is quite magnificent, and Marmion's death beautiful. Why is your Hero so false ? Why do you make him so brave and fine a creature, and yet so treacherous ? I wish he had been a Knight of Love who never broke His vow.

I wish you would not spend your time in editing Swift's Works. It is quite a loss to the World that you should employ yourself in any works but your own. What is your Highland plan ? You have no idea how you are rated because you have no vanity ; but, I who delight to talk of you, know how much your talents are

[1] Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, for example, has fifteen of such adulatory pieces.

[2] Scott's reply assured Lady A. that he knew nothing of it, and suggested that one of his publishers sent it.

valued.[1] . . As usual I am interrupted, and really must close this—tho' I had much to say.—With best wishes to Mrs. Scott, yours most truly.

A. A.

[Several letters passed between Scott and Lady Abercorn during the next few months. In October comes from him a request for permission to inscribe "my magnificent Swift to Lord Abercorn. . . I should not like to lay his Lordship under the dilemma of accepting what he might perhaps justly regard as no great compliment. Any new original work of my own is a very distant consideration." To which Lady Abercorn replies :]

From the same

[October, 1808.]

My Dear Friend,—. . . Lord Abercorn wonders that you could imagine a dedication from you and Sotheby could have the least thing in common. He says he accepts with great pleasure the Dedication of your Swift, and to prove how much he likes it from you, he begs it may not preclude his being thought of again when you write any thing original, particularly any thing of Chivalry. I assure you, tho' you have many admirers, you have not one who so truly likes your poetry and thinks so highly of your talents as he does. Therefore you do just what *I wish*, and I can tell you *entre nous*, he wondered amongst *your friends he* was not thought of before.

I shall lament Mrs. Scott's coming to London at a moment when I shall not be able to shew her that attention I wish. We are too deeply afflicted now to see any one that we are not very intimate with ; if it was a few months later I shou'd be delighted to get acquainted with her and shew her every attention.—God bless you, dear Mr. Scott, yours most sincerely,

A. A.

P.S.—I must see you when you come to London.

From the same January 12th, 1810.

My Dear Friend,—Tho' I do not think you give a good excuse for not writing to me, yet I will own my weakness, that when you do write I forgive you the past, and as I am now rather *short of time* and have rather a head ache, I will not spend the few moments I have in scolding or reproaches.

I am quite happy to hear how far you are advanced in a new

[1] " . . . An edition of Swift will do well after such a scourging crop as *Marmion*," was the end of the author's long explanation.

poem. Lord A. desires me to tell you that he accepts with great pleasure your offer to inscribe it to him, and begs you to consider it his wish without waiting to have his opinion, as he is much flattered to have any thing with your name addressed to him. You are not, I believe, aware how much he admires your poetry, and though you must be so much accustomed to praise as almost to be insensible to it, yet I think his admiration is flattering because it is sincere and never given but to real talent and merit.[1]

Why did you not tell me the story of the poem? I am sure Mrs. Scott, who is always so good to me, would have written it for me. I am almost *hurt* at seeing an account of it in the Irish Paper the very day I received your letter, for I consider myself one of your *most confidential friends*. What do you get for it? The Irish Paper says £2000, which I hope is true. I am sure you never can get as much as it is worth.[2]

Lord Clarendon, tho' our neighbour at the Priory, I know little of; but I hear he is a sensible gentlemanly Man. I am sorry you correspond with him because it may be a means of depriving us of some days of your society when you come to our part of England.

I wish your claim may be successful. Is it for the death of the same Old Man that you wait for the emolument? I hope it is secure to you, for I know you are not in favour with [the] Opposition; and I confess, how this present Government will hold I cannot imagine.[3] I am no friend to Canning. He behaved dishonourably. I hope you do not defend treachery and arrogance.

We have Miss Owenson still here. She is certainly entertaining and clever. Did you review her last Novel?[4] She thinks you did. She wishes very much you did not hold her talents so cheap. I tell her you would not if you knew her; for, tho' superior you are yourself to all living poets, you are the best natured Man existing, and more ready to allow Genius than any one I know. If I can get her lines to me in time you shall have them, but she is afraid you shou'd see them; they were written in five minutes *on my word*, and not corrected. Why do you never think me worth writing anything for? How I should value an Address to friendship!

A word for Miss Owenson

[1] Refers to *The Lady of the Lake* (1810), which Scott accordingly dedicated to the Marquess of Abercorn.

[2] The price was 2,000 guineas, not pounds. "When I was fond of horses I learned from the jockey to sell by guineas, and buy by pounds," replied Scott.

[3] The reference is to Scott's Clerkship, worth £1,300 p.a., which was still being drawn by the old man who previously held the post (see page 21 and *n.*).

[4] *The Wild Irish Girl*, by Sidney Owenson, who became Lady Morgan in the circumstances described by Lady Abercorn (see page 22). The review, one of the "Quarterly Review's" cut-and-thrust efforts, was not by Scott.

Miss Owenson asked me if you ever had been in love. I told her if I could judge by your way of talking of Mrs. Scott I should certainly conclude you had ! and that when she read—

> "In peace, Love tunes the Shepherd's reed ;
> In war, he mounts the Warrior's steed ;
> In halls, in gay attire is seen ;
> In hamlets, dances on the green.
> Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,
> And men below, and saints above ;
> For love is heaven, and heaven is love,"

she might judge whether you knew how to describe it at least ! Pray tell me what Passion Sappho meant to describe in that Fragment translated by Philips.

> Bless'd as the immortal Gods is he.

Was it love or jealousy ? I think it was jealousy. Now pray sit down, and answer all my foolish questions. Indeed you use me very ill. If you have any sheets of your *Lady of the Lake* send them to me. My kindest wishes to Mrs. Scott,—Most truly my dear friend,

Yrs. A. A.

[It was this letter from Lady Abercorn, with its enquiry whether he had ever been in love, which drew from Scott one of his very few declarations on the subject—and the most remarkable. Replying to his friend, a few days later, he made this statement with reference to *The Lady of the Lake* : " . . . I have tried, according to a promise, [apparently made to Lady A. : *vide* her first letter] to make a knight of love who never broke a vow. . . Though I have succeeded tolerably well with the damsel, my lover, in spite of my best exertions, is like to turn out what the players call a *walking gentleman*. It is incredible the pains it has cost me to give him a little dignity. Notwithstanding this, I have had in my time melancholy cause to paint from experience, for I gained no advantage from three years' constancy, except the said experience and some advantage to my conversation and manners. Mrs. Scott's match and mine was of our own making, and proceeded from the most sincere affection on both sides, which has rather increased than diminished during twelve years' marriage. But it was something short of love in all its forms, which I suspect people only *feel* once in their lives ; folks who have been nearly drowned in bathing rarely venturing a second time out of their depth."

As this selection from the Letter-Books is intended to illustrate not only the life and correspondence of the times, but to trace the Fortunes of Sir Walter, the attachment at which Scott hints should be recalled. For a considerable period after 1790 he wooed the pretty Williamina, sole child and heiress of Sir John Stuart of Fettercairn. His passion for the girl—she was then only in her teens—was a very deep one ; and there is reason for believing that, at any rate for a time, she was attracted

by the comely youth, destined to achieve such fame. However, she gave her hand elsewhere; and married in 1799 Sir William Forbes. Apparently she and Scott never met again, although—as we shall see—her husband proved a generous friend to Sir Walter in the disasters that overtook him later. There is a letter of Lady Louisa Stuart, written after Sir Walter's death, which quotes him as saying that after Williamina's marriage he withdrew his waking thoughts from her, but nothing painful ever happened to him that he did not dream of her before it. This first love inspired some of his tenderest passages in *The Lay, Redgauntlet,* and *The Lady of the Lake.* It is a curious coincidence that the year in which he makes this avowal to Lady Abercorn saw the death of Williamina. He married in 1797 Miss Charlotte Margaret Carpenter; and his tribute to her is recorded in pathetic entries in his Diary on her death in 1826.]

LOCKHART'S LATEST FROM LONDON

April, 1826 . . .	. Oxonian dissipations—Charles Scott's future—Rough treatment for Moore—Fears for Murray.
[*Mrs. Lockhart, Jan.* 14, 1827]	. A place in the Excise—Chance for Lockhart.
[*George Canning, Feb.* 7, 1827]	. Lockhart's reputation—no claims to gratitude or goodwill.
[*Sir Walter Scott, Feb.* 24, 1827]	. Reply to Canning.
May 6, 1827 . . .	. Political bloods getting hot—£10,000 from offices—A Royal Society's twaddle.
Dec. 25, 1827 . . .	. A Peer pockets the unpocketable—Lady Conyngham's power—Croker outcrokered—Cruikshank's art.
Nov. 3, 1828 . . .	. Cobbett in Wellington's pay—Dark days—The Duke of Clarence in a strait-waistcoat—Regency problem.
Nov. 28, 1828 . . .	. Another place vacant—Political intrigues—Bulwer-Lytton.
Nov. 9, 1829 . . .	. The loss of Tom Purdie—Prussian nonsense—A Royal bedside comedy.
May 17, 1830 . . .	. His Majesty's last advice to his Mistress — More intrigue — Making a little money.

Scott deserved Lockhart. Success came to the most popular of the world's popular authors as with one hand, only to be snatched away by the other. He built Abbotsford in the foreground of visions of baronial splendour; and, when his eldest son married, he held there his first grand ball—which was his last. His devoted children were hardly more robust than his commercial ventures. Although the glory of his fame still blazed, there was towards the end a tragic forlornness about that brave toiling figure. But there was also John Gibson Lockhart. It is somewhat of a fairy tale—almost the story of another industrious apprentice: his winning of the proud knight's daughter; and his final contribution towards the retrieving of the family fortunes. Except that Lockhart hardly fits in with fairy stuff: he was too sardonic, too "hard-boiled." An impishness of youth turned sour with success and failure. He became a grim man, playing a single hand; with few hopes and fewer illusions. Home was his haven, although there was disappointment enough there in the end; Scotland his heaven, with the lights all shining round Sir Walter. "Take a good hard hammer (it need not be a sledge one), break the shell, and the kernel will repay you," wrote Scott to Mrs. Hughes, bespeaking her affection for the Lockhart with the "cold exterior."

It is not every young Scotsman who has fifty people to give him a farewell dinner before leaving for London and fame. "Much wine was shed," reported Scott. "Many songs and speeches to the honour and glory of the said Don Giovanni, who fell asleep in his chair, about one in the morning, to the sound of his own praises." A cold exterior? But this was a special occasion. Was he not going to London to edit the "Quarterly Review" against the "Edinburgh," for £2,500 a year and extras? The morning after the night before, John Gibson reassumes that "cold exterior concealing the warmest affections"; and is ready for all the heavy hammers of London. It is now that he enters Sir Walter's Letter-Books to some purpose. A man young in years, he was old

in shrewdness. He is soon the family adviser—Scott's literary agent—and, above all, London correspondent to Abbotsford. Such he is in these letters, with a revealing episode when Sophy's effort to give him " a lift " almost ruptured the friendship of Scott and Canning on the eve of the latter becoming Prime Minister. No sinecures for him—and Sophy's husband goes on shaking his head disgustedly, and making his £5,000 a year steadily. Sir Walter once wrote an illuminating chapter on Lockhart by just two strokes of his pen. He was in the habit of endorsing most of the letters he received with the correspondent's name, occasionally adding some comment or memorandum. On the back of one of Lockhart's letters in the Abbotsford MSS. he wrote his son-in-law's name thus :

£ockhart.

Scott was no reader of the newspapers—such as they were : nor was there need while John Gibson was in London, with a quill and a frank, meeting all the important people and dropping in reluctantly to the best clubs. His first letter supplies a contrast that is illuminating. The Huntly Gordon mentioned—sometime amanuensis at Abbotsford—is praised in the *Life* of Scott for his honourable firmness in refusing office as a priest on account of his deafness. Here Lockhart considers that same infirmity a formidable objection to the trade of " lying abroad " for Charles Scott, and that the business of preaching the Truth at home would suit him better. Even more interesting is the biographer's concern as to how his father-in-law will receive his condemnation of Moore's *Life* of Sheridan which appeared in the new editor's first issue of the " Quarterly Review." Scott greatly esteemed Thomas Moore ; and had sent Lockhart a letter of wise advice, including a pretty plain hint to " give Tom his full merits " and to consider his poetical rank, apart from the political criticism necessary. We know that Sir Walter did not like his son-in-law's review in the " Quarterly " : he would have liked it still less had he known—as is now proved—that the alleged letter of Miss Linley (afterwards Mrs. Sheridan), which Lockhart used so forcibly, though sincerely, against Moore, was a forgery. Scott reserved his gentle protest for the privacy of his Diary. Nevertheless, the mutual affection and confidence of the two men grows stronger in their correspondence through the uneasy days that follow—until Scott's last moment, so poignantly described in the *Life* : " Lockhart," he said, " I may have but a minute to speak to you. My dear, be a good man—be virtuous—be religious—be a good man. Nothing else will give you comfort

when you come to lie here." And when they, in time, buried him at the feet of Sir Walter, the trees round Dryburgh Abbey could sigh: "Lockhart also deserved Scott."

From John Gibson Lockhart [LONDON, April, 1826.]

MY DEAR SIR,—I have had a good deal of talk about various matters with Charles, and among others about his Oxonian affairs. He seems resolved *not* to attempt any honour at his degree-taking, and I confess that since his tutor's opinion is that "he *might* try for a *Second* class" I am inclined to agree he is right. A First Class is the only distinction of the kind that is of the least value, and I own it puzzles me to know why Surtees and Charles, after being with such a man as Williams, think a First Class degree a matter of so great difficulty as not even to try for it.[1] They must want the ambition of Scholarship or have been thrown into Society where that is not the tone. Nobody says that the examinations are stricter now than they were in my day, and we really took first class degrees after having spent the far greater part of our Academical time in dissipation, such I am sure poor Charles has no notion of, and miscellaneous reading. However, this is all useless. Charles will not, and I suppose need not *now*, try. He is naturally anxious about his future destination. As to the diplomatic career, he has a very amiable difficulty—viz., the fear that it would be necessary for him to travel for some time ere he began it and that the expense of this might be inconvenient. This I am sure is not to be the real difficulty. I confess *I* fear, in spite of all Croker says—for Croker is *not* trusted by the Upper People—that *Malachi* may have very much lessened your chance of getting anything from the present Ministry.[2] It is, however, lucky that Charles has a free year or more before him, and those feelings may probably be at least softened ere the day comes.

Learning and dissipation

I had always thought that the Church would suit Charles better than any other profession—more especially since his deafness which, unless it *very much* diminishes, would be a formidable objection to the trade of "lying abroad for the good of his Country"; and in

[1] E. Villiers Surtees, the school-friend of Scott's younger son Charles, who became a judge in the Mauritius. Professor Williams, under whom the lads studied at Lampeter, was one of the greatest Welsh scholars.

[2] In the *Letters of Malachi Malagrowther* (1824) Scott had attacked successfully the proposals of the Government to suppress the circulation of the small Scottish Bank notes—one of his few excursions into political writing. *Malachi* did not "lessen Scott's chance"; and Charles got a place in the Foreign Office.

that line I am certain your son could not fail to meet with splendid patronage. But Charles speaks of the Church with a decided aversion, and hints towards the Army. I think it right to say all this as I know his shyness about speaking on such matters himself. I trust the world will not use us all so badly but you may come to town next Spring, and see what is to be done on the spot. I think there is every likelihood we may have another King ere then, or at least a *Regent*: for it is, I believe, undoubted that the King's mind has been in a sadly alarming state during the last two or three illnesses he has had, and these have been severe ones to the body. King Frederick would unquestionably try to get Canning &c. *out*, and by the bye the only real rival Canning has is the Duke of Wellington. The Duke is openly opposed to the recent measures of Free Trade &c., and his Embassy this Winter seems a happy trick of Canning's to get rid of him in the Cabinet at the crisis through which Huskisson now *appears* to have passed safe. Canning's own health seems to be at least as dubious as the great Captain's. Peel is not *rising*, I think, as he was expected to do: I suppose he abstains from efforts in the House because he is there overtopped by Canning, and in the Cabinet the Genius of Wellington has overcome all but Canning, whom it *checks*. I daresay the Duke, if he had health, would make a noble Premier.

I shall be anxious to hear your real opinion as to the Review. I was obliged to change some parts of Pepys, as you will see, because you had misstated facts; and to print it without giving you a proof in consequence of Murray's earnestness to have the Number opened by your hand. The article "Reason and Révélation" is by [Professor] Williams. That on [*Vie et Révélation de la Sœur Nativité*] by Southey; one on "Six months in the West Indies" and another on Moore's *Life of S.*[1] by myself. I am afraid you will think I have treated Moore too roughly, but I could not help it. His book is full of baseness, and it was impossible for the "Quarterly" to treat it silkily. *Entre nous*, his treatment of the King was more unpardonable than anybody knows—for Croker took care to put him fully in possession of all the facts of the case long before the book was printed. First and last old Sherry (besides his sinecure)

George IV and Sheridan

[1] *i.e.*, Thomas Moore's *Life* of Sheridan, the dramatist. Lockhart complained of Moore's incessant attempts to disparage George IV by representing him as having deserted Sheridan, who had served him politically; and narrated the monetary transactions between Sheridan and the Prince Regent (as George then was). Lockhart suggested that it was Sheridan who fought shy of his Royal patron because a large sum of money advanced by the Regent for contesting a seat, which the dramatist had said he wanted, had been spent in other ways.

received from the privy purse upwards of £30,000 in *cash*. Croker and Sir W. Knighton both overlooked my paper ere it was published, and I *heard* the notes of George IV *read*; for once or twice through inadvertence the style of "His Royal Highness" was dropt and "*I*" took its place. Besides nobody else *could* have written those notes which prove the writer to be a very clever writer indeed. . .

Huntly Gordon has just called. His deafness is a sad difficulty but I will do what I can for him. Murray, I am sorry to say, is so eternally drunk that I scarcely ever see him fit for serious business. He will kill himself very shortly, I fear.[1] His paper sells very well, and everybody admits that it is very well managed by Dr. Maginn. But it is the Master's eye that fattens the Mare, and there is no hope of getting other news or advertisements *soon* so long as this obstinate profligacy of his continues to hang heavy on all the arrangements of the concern. However, the thing *is* making way, and will, I doubt not, be worth much money in a year's time. I trust your next will speak favourably of Lady S's health. My love to Anne and many thanks for her very kind letter and offer.—Always your affectionately

J. G. L.

From Mrs. J. G. Lockhart[2] WIMBLEDON COMMON,
Friday evening, [Jan. 14th, 1827].

MY DEAR PAPA,—I think you saw, while with us, a Mr. Henry Ellis, a brother of Lady Sarah Robinson's, the Chancellor of the Exchequer's wife, and whom I told you was a great friend of Lockhart's and who has now a very comfortable post at one of the Boards. His wife has written to me in confidence by the desire of her husband, this evening, to tell me (as he knows Lockhart himself will make no use of the information) that for certain a Mr. Bankhouse succeeds Mr. Planta in the Foreign Office, and that in the Excise a man of talent was very much wanted, and a place would be vacated in this arrangement, which is to take place finally in June. He adds that he is sure Lockhart would have a capital chance if our great friends would give us a lift, and hoped I could make some use of the early information he gave me of this change. Do you think Lady Stafford would assist me? or is there any friend of yours would do

A "lift" for Lockhart

[1] Here is obviously some exaggeration (see footnote, page 355). Anyhow, the publisher continued his brilliant and hard-working career for another seventeen years. The newspaper referred to was "The Representative," founded by Murray at Disraeli's suggestion. It lived six months.

[2] Scott's elder daughter, through whom the family continued, had been married to Lockhart six years at this time. Walter is her younger son; Johnny the elder.

anything. I received this information unknown to Lockhart, and wrote it to you also unknown to him, as he would only shake his head and say what *post* would ever come his way, and wait, *not patiently*, till honours are thrust upon him. I wait in the hope you will write to me if you think any good can come of the kindness of Mr. Ellis's early information, and if I can do anything in it. I am now quite recovered, but a perfect skeleton in consequence. I suffer terribly from cold, and this is the coldest place I ever was in. Walter would not look at a new Nurse, and in consequence we have been obliged to wean him, but as yet he goes on quite well. Johnny is stouter than I could have hoped [after] the bad illness he had before we left London. He joins me in Affectionate love to his " Hapapa " and Aunt Anne, and ever believe me, dear Papa, to remain with every good wish of the season,—Your affectionate daughter,

C. SOPHIA LOCKHART.

From The Rt. Hon. George Canning [1]

BRIGHTON,
Febry : 17, 1827.

MY DEAR SIR,—Publick Rumour will have accounted to you, in a great degree, for the delay of my answer to your letter of the 16th of Janry. But I am anxious to avail myself of one of the first days on which I am allowed to attend to business, publick or private, to account for that delay myself, and to terminate it.

I received your letter on the very day on which I set out to attend the Funeral at Windsor.[2] The following week I was unluckily obliged to employ in two long journies, during which the seeds of a cold, caught at the Funeral, were brought to such maturity that on my return here about the 27th of Janry : I was obliged to take to my bed, from which I am not yet risen.

I now proceed to the substance of your letter, with which I am sure you will allow me to deal, in all the frankness of old friendship.

Canning refuses his aid

In the first place, I have no cognizance of any vacancies actual or probable in any Department of the State except my own. And no influence upon new appointments in those other Departments, except such as any friend or supporter of Government might have through direct solicitation addressed to the Head of any one of those Departments. You see, therefore, that an application to any Minister for a situation not in his own gift, is to request him, not to *do*, but to *ask* a favour, which are sometimes very different things.

[1] At this date Foreign Secretary in the Administration of Lord Liverpool, after whose death (1827) he was made Prime Minister by George IV. He died later the same year.

[2] of Frederick Augustus, Duke of York (see *Vide* page 146).

For instance—It might be a very gratifying thing to confer a favour upon an individual, personally unfriendly to oneself. But it would be a humiliation to solicit a favour for such a person at another's hands.

Lockhart's reputation

You cannot be unaware, my dear Sir, that Mr. Lockhart has the reputation in London of being (and of having been invited from Scotland for the very purpose of being) at the head of that portion of the Press which sympathizes with, what I understand to be, the language of Blackwood in Scotland; and which attacks, with a fury unknown till lately to modern political controversy, the measures to which I am supposed to be favourable and, personally, myself.[1]

I certainly cannot prove that such is Mr. Lockhart's occupation, but it is a belief so rooted as not easily to be eradicated in the minds of those who recollect the latitude which so sturdy a moralist as Dr. Johnson allows to the denial of unavowed writings.[2]

I have neither the desire nor the pretension to complain of any of the attacks that are made upon me on account of publick measures. I am too much practized in political life not to know pretty well what such attacks can do towards the permanent injury of any Man who is conscious that he is discharging his Publick Duty in a manner which he conscientiously thinks most advantageous to his Country. Nor have I ever, to the best of my recollection, mentioned Mr. Lockhart's name as coupled with that system of political hostility to me to which I have referred, until your application to me in Mr. Lockhart's behalf laid me under the necessity of either returning an evasive answer, which I should be unwilling to do to you, or of stating frankly the reason why I believe that Gentleman to have no claim upon my personal gratitude or goodwill.—Believe me, my dear Sir, with great truth and esteem, your sincere and faithful Servant,

GEO. CANNING.

[1] Canning's suspicion is curious—considering that he is said to have favoured bringing Lockhart to London as Editor of the "Quarterly." "Blackwood's Magazine," whose criticism of the future Premier had threatened this rift in his old friendship with Scott, subsequently satirised the "Quarterly" for being "as meek and mum as a mouse . . . afraid to lose the countenance and occasional assistance of Mr. Canning."

[2] "Talking of the wonderful concealment of the authour of the celebrated letters signed *Junius*, he [Dr. Johnson] said, 'I should have believed Burke to be Junius, because I know no man but Burke who is capable of writing these letters; but Burke spontaneously denied it to me. The case would have been different had I asked him if he was the authour; a man so questioned, as to an anonymous publication, may think he has a right to deny it'"—Boswell's *Johnson* (Hill's Ed., III, 376–7).

From Sir Walter Scott to George Canning EDINBURGH,
Feb. 24, 1827.

My Dear Sir,—I am extremely sorry that my troublesome letter should have reached you when bad health and business were both besetting; and, indeed, have great reason to regret that I ever wrote at all. Whether Mr. Lockhart regards your opinions in the unfriendly manner which circumstances induce you to suppose can be of very little consequence to you, nor is [it] perhaps—as he is so very great a stranger to you—of very much importance to him whether your suspicions are true or false, as the effect will naturally be the same in your mind. For it cannot be that whether suspected or guilty he has drawn upon your patronage. It is rather different, however, with one whom you call an old friend, and who certainly would be unworthy of a title on which he has set a great value; and it is on my own account, and not on my son-in-law's, that I trouble you with a few lines in the way of explanation, as I actually feel hurt at the idea of being supposed to recommend to your patronage a person whose object in coming to London was to injure you so far as he could in the public mind and who has caballed with Periodical Publications for the same purpose. Upon the first of these points I can give a very decided testimony, for I was—as may be supposed—fully acquainted with the particular writers and persons that were the occasion of Mr. Lockhart going to London and the [? means] which his change of residence offered. I can safely say you have been much misinformed in supposing him influenced by any political passion, political views, or political opinions on that occasion. This I say decidedly because the very deeds were under my own eyes, and were literary. In what he may have employed himself since he was in London I cannot pretend to be accurate, but if in anything that could be displeasing or disrespectful to you I must say your letter insinuated to me the first idea of such a thing. I do not know personally the writer who wrote the paper in "Blackwood's Magazine," but I have heard his name, and I do not believe he is even known to Lockhart. Blackwood himself acts as Editor to the work—I mean procures, selects, or rejects articles; so that the mere fact of having occasionally written in it can furnish no evidence of being connected with or approving the different parts more of one of the same number, far less of different. I do not believe, though I do not personally know, that Lockhart has had any connection with the magazine from the time he went to London. I beg you to understand, my dear Sir,

Scott defends Lockhart

that this letter—unnecessary in every other point of view—is written only with regard to myself. What Mr. Lockhart's politicks may be I know to be of indifference to you. But I do not wish to leave the impression on your mind that I was interceding in behalf of a person who was likely either to be unpleasing to you in the meantime or disagreeable afterwards; and I have only to add, if I could have guessed that such was your opinion, however imperfectly founded, it would have been the last act in my life to have merited a deserved repulse or to give you and myself the pain of such a disagreeable correspondence. I will not detain you longer now by expressing my sincere thanks for your candour and frankness upon the present occasion; and to express my sincere wishes for health that is of so much consequence to the nation. Do not let any thought of answering the present letter encroach either upon business or leisure. You will easily understand that the purpose is a vindication of my own request, not an appeal against your judgement: the former seems rather called for; the latter disrespectful to you, and would not be very worthy on my own part.—I am, dear Sir, very truly, your most faithful and obedient servant,

WALTER SCOTT.[1]

From John Gibson Lockhart

WIMBLEDON,
Sunday, May 6, 1827.

MY DEAR SIR,—I enclose the remainder of your valuable and pleasing paper on John Home,[2] and hope to receive all the proofs corrected forthwith, as the article will be of essential importance to me at this time, when, God knows, all the aid I can receive will be little enough to support me under the effects of the melancholy changes. I hope you may also find leisure to give me a little of your advice. . .

Canning obviously wants temper, and he may already, by some of his rash declarations, have thrown difficulties in his own way *within* the allied camp. The bloods on both sides are getting so hot that everybody expects some personal quarrel in the course of another week. You have seen how fiercely William Peel and young

[1] This letter is printed from the copy, in Scott's handwriting, following Canning's letter in the Abbotsford MSS. Apparently Sir Walter called for an explanation from his son-in-law, and received a "perfectly satisfactory letter." Lockhart afterwards had a friendly intimation from Canning, which he wished he "could have afforded to resent as an insult." Canning also was "perfectly satisfied" with the explanation given. There the "disagreeable" episode ended, for Canning died shortly afterwards.

[2] *i.e.*, proofs of Scott's review of Mackenzie's *Life* of John Home.

Castlereagh [1] speak out, and "Bull" has at length taken his side with high effect and talent which I do not believe to be Hook's. There will be another set of quarrels—and where is Theodore Hook for protection now when the £11,000 Mauritius default is hauled up, which it is sure to be by Brougham or someone against whom "John Bull" has said and sung all that he can either sing or say? [2] Croker is gone to Dublin again about his Election. He is sure to be insulted by E. Dawson or some other *Pat* when he returns.

Mr. Barron tells me Canning fought hard to get the Scotch patronage, as much of it as Melville had, for Lord Binning, but that Lord Lansdowne has insisted and prevailed to have it all with the Home Seals, if he takes them. This will be heavy news for the Parliament House; and indeed, if the case be so really, will, I should think, *unite* the Scotch Tory interest against the new Government—a loss which they may learn to lament ere long.

I think everybody now looks for a dissolution, but no one can yet say where the ground for a trial of strength is to [be] taken; nor can *anybody* tell what the relative strength will be, for everyday we hear of men supposed to be with the outs creeping *in*, and *vice versa*. The Whigs alone can lose nothing, and they wear happy faces truly. John Archibald Murray among the rest—for there is a gathering of *Northern Lights* about Whitehall at this moment. Sir John Sinclair told Murray *he* had written at once to Sir Robert Peel counselling him to make his son resign, and that his counsel had been adopted. Meantime other accounts represent the ancient cotton-spinner [3] as rather of another way of thinking—counting up "£6000, Robert; £1500, William; and £2000 my son-in-law Dawson!"—and concluding: "Consistency sounds pretty, but £10,000 a year by one family is a pretty price." This is Lady Louisa Stuart's story, who execrates Canning for his mis-using her relative Sir Charles about some Embassy, and has no love for Peel *qua pleb*.

Lady Stuart and the Peels

I saw the old *C*—— lounging about Downing-street, and at

[1] Brother of the statesman Sir Robert Peel, and son of Viscount Castlereagh.

[2] Hook, editor of the Tory paper "John Bull," had been sentenced to imprisonment 1823–5 and his property confiscated for deficiencies in accounts when he was Accountant-General of the Mauritius. A novelist and wit, he is the "Mr. Wagg" of *Vanity Fair* and Lucian Gay of *Coningsby*.

[3] That is, the first Sir Robert Peel, parent of the calico-printing industry in Lancashire. His famous son Robert was Home Secretary from 1822 to 1827; his next younger son, Wm. Yates Peel, was appointed a Commissioner of the Board of Control, 1826; and George Robert Dawson, who married the eldest daughter, was Joint Secretary to the Treasury, 1830.

once guessed he was come up to help settling poor Britannia's concerns.—Yours always,

J. G. LOCKHART.

P.S.—I have got your Royal Society of Literature Medal. It is a very pretty thing—the King's head, and the legend *Gualtero Scott—Poetae*. Such twaddle as their proceedings, the whole of which I was fain to hear, I really did not believe could exist in any Xtian land.

From the same

24, SUSSEX PLACE,
December 25, 1827.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have received your very pleasing letter and Johnny's book which I shall take care of that he may have it entire when he has sense to value the presentation copy of such a work. Your account of the Copyrights &c. affords to Sophia and myself more pleasure than any recent occurrence of any kind.

I don't know that I have any more news. L^d^ Goderich is fond of office; and, being driven to a resignation by his wife's teasing and his own timorousness about Grey, has been easily pushed back again by her Ladyship's *second* teasing and the encouraging speeches of Huskisson and the Whigs, who found that the King would not indulge them as to Holland House; and that Huskisson himself had *no chance*, and who therefore were at a loss for a stop-gap. By this return, pocketing an affront which he had so gravely represented as unpocketable, and coming in so exactly in the state of men and things that induced him to propose going out, the Premier has caused much laughter among all men of all parties: and the pertinacity with which his *own* paper, the *Courier*, denied and denies his resignation has not tended to diminish popular merriment. His own friends tell him he has been made a fool of, and surely he must have perceived that Lansdowne, Huskisson and Co. have views easily separable from the question of his supremacy. I cannot discover whether there is any foundation for the rumour of *their* having tampered with Lord Grey. The common understanding is that that grim peer will move an amendment on the address; and, unless there be a new batch of peers, which the King will hardly accede to, particularly with France so near him, without thinking twice, carry it: in which case Goderich being no Wm Pitt will at once strike his tricolor flag.

A much-teased lord

As an indication of what one shrewd person thinks, Mr. Locker of Greenwich tells me in confidence that Croker tells him in confidence

the D. of W[ellington] must be Premier in 2 months. Croker told me himself to-day that he has been 3 days at Strathfieldsaye within the last week. So he has at last made his peace in that quarter—not improbably by doing service of the same sort which he rendered unto Canning in the Spring.

Nothing holds the Govt for an hour together but the Marchioness. Whenever the King perceives that the instability of the Govt overbalances, in point of personal ease and comfort, the extraordinary and really most unconstitutional powers of patronage recently enjoyed by him, it falls: and as it is said Lady C [1] has now provided for *1100* people, Bishops and tidewaiters both included, perhaps other causes may co-operate in accelerating the reception of a new Light.

Lady Conyngham's power

I saw Lord Dudley yesterday: he has his house all covered with red cloth in expectation of Don Meguel,[2] and is himself as slovenly and outré as ever. He made many pretty speeches about you—and informed me that Lord Wm Harvey is very likely to go attaché to Vienna *immediately* in which case Charles will have his place at the Foreign office. The Earl approved of what I had suggested as to reading, and wishes the future Diplomat to hold himself in readiness for a brief warning. This is all good.

I knew through Dr. Ferguson that all through this business—and in opposition to every *rumour*—the Duke of Wellington has kept up close intimacy with Sir Wm Knighton. The Bart was ill ten days ago, and Dr. Gooch found the Duke at his bedside 3 nights successively at 10 or 11 o'clock. What a cunning dog Knighton is—he out-crokers Croker with a vengeance.

Your "champion" Price is among the new Baronets: so is Mr. Philips your Manchester friend. Old Price has just printed, not published, a very curious essay on the pronunciation of the [?] tongue, but it smells a little in its details of the apoplexy of Granada. He is now 86 years old.

I enclose a Xmas box for the Lady Anne—being John Gilpin with capital prints by the only Caricaturist of our day, Cruikshank. Do look at the getting into the post chaise 3 doors off from John's own sign. Sophia is still in expectation—but really wonderfully well

[1] *i.e.*, Lady Conyngham. In her husband's lifetime she was the mistress of George IV, having succeeded in that position Lady Hertford, who had ousted Lady Jersey. Greville, in his *Memoirs*, states (1821) that Lady C. must have accumulated enormous wealth; and that she removed two wagon-loads of jewellery and plate from Windsor Castle during the King's illness.

[2] *i.e.*, Dom Miguel, Regent in Portugal, who usurped the Crown.

every-way, considering. The Boys are in great bloom, and Johnny has finished the 2d volume of *his* book.—Ever affectly yours,

J. G. LOCKHART.

From the same

LONDON,
Novr. 3rd, 1828.

MY DEAR SIR,—I send you herewith £100 to account of the paper on *Salmonia* (with which Lady Davy is in ecstacies) and also proofs of *Hajji* which I think famously good. Be pleased to return these as soon as you can as I want it to open the next Q.R.[1]

I received your very kind letter about Southey several days after his anti-Catholic paper had been published and consequently to no purpose except that it filled me with many painful apprehensions. I believe you may now assure yourself that no harm is done. Vesey Fitzgerald told a friend of mine this morning that neither he nor any man had suspected the strength of the Protestants in Ireland, and that what was doing there and had been already done here placed the Question on a wholly new footing. The result, no one doubts, is that the Question will be utterly suppressed as far as Gov is concerned for a long time to come. Shiel [*sic*] dined with Murray the day after Pennenden, and said very frankly that he had seen enough to satisfy that no Gov durst do anything for them at present. As for Cobbett—he is evidently in the Duke's pay; he has I *know* been dining constantly at Paddy Holmes's, the H. of Commons's whipper-in all this Summer. Even Sir Alexander Grant (so public a person as the Chairman of the Committees) told me he has met the Bonegrubber there *on Sundays occasionally*, and found him a very good fellow—the devil doubts him.[2]

Wellington and Cobbett

I fear the Duke has still darker questions to solve. It seems no longer to be denied that the King has dropsical symptoms. His belly has disappeared—his legs are useless; in short, all the circumstances of the Duke of York's case. The alarm was so great on Saturday that Dr. Hughes was in communication with the Mansion House about the ringing of the great bell of St. Paul's. Then the Duke of Clarence *has been* in a straight waistcoat, and is now in a

[1] Refers to reviews by Scott in the "Quarterly Review" of Sir Humphry Davy's *Salmonia* and Morier's *Hajji Baba in England.*

[2] Baron Fitzgerald, President of the Board of Trade, Paymaster-General of the Forces, etc. Richard Lalor Sheil, dramatist and politician, who addressed a hostile meeting at Pennenden Heath on October 24 convened to petition against farther relaxation of the anti-Catholic laws. "Bonegrubber," one of the epithets applied to Cobbett because he piously brought back from America the bones of Tom Paine. "The Duke," of course, is the Duke of Wellington.

most feeble state of health, so much so that he took farewell of his children some days ago. The Crown would, it is to be feared, turn his head clean, even if he should regain bodily health. Then a child—and a Regency—and who for Regent ? Cumberland odious to one half the nation, and not popular with any part of it ; Sussex despised by all and politically obnoxious to all the upper influences ; Cambridge, I fear, more than half crazy ! I suppose the end will be a Council of Regency including the Duchess of Kent and the Archbishop of Canterbury, and some quiet great Lord of the land. You may truly say that the Duke of W. has the whole state and Empire on his shoulders. . .—God bless you, says yours ever,

J. G. L.

[A few days later Lockhart writes : " Southey is here as black and gloomy as possible, but in great vigour every way. He seems to have access to all sorts of intelligence."]

From the same

LONDON,
Saturday, Nov. 28, 1828.

My Dear Sir,—I have two letters of yours on my table which would not be the case but for the following circumstance. A week ago Dr. Gooch put it into my head that something might be had in the New College worth looking after (Horner has a fine house and £1500 a year as Warden in the London University), and asked if he might sound the Invisible.[1] The consequence was a summons to call in the morning, early as usual. We talked over various matters, and he said he would *inquire*, and if he found that a lodgement of real value could be made would propose it, and he could answer, he thought, for the zealous aid of Lord Aberdeen and the Archbishop—" not to mention the King." As we were parting I told him of an accident I had almost witnessed at Brighton two days before, viz. the sudden death by a horse's kick of an ancient gentleman who had held for 50 years or so the place of Gazette-writer for England (worth, I am assured, about £1500 per annum) ; and asked if that place were in Lord Aberdeen's gift, for the defunct was an old Under-Secretary of the Foreign Department. He answered that he could not tell, but that he would immediately write to Lord Aberdeen which he did in my presence, thus : " Would not this do for Mr. L[ockhart,] about whom we are so anxious ? " This occurred on Tuesday, and I have heard nothing of it since, but this will

More good posts vacant

[1] George IV's " confidential man "—Sir William Knighton, Keeper of the Privy Purse. Also known as " the Great Unseen."

explain my not writing sooner and my not doing at this moment as you suggest in relation to his Grace the protector.[1]

When at Brighton I saw Rose, who has now quite recovered, and is better than he has been for more than two years. That place is very gay—7 Dukes, etc. etc., Lord Dudley and Lady *L.* I went to see Henry Ellis who is in very bad health, I fear, preparing for Lithotomy.

Yesterday we dined with Chantrey who has been down to Windsor to assist in placing the pictures and statues in that noble place. He and Wilkie were two days, 3 hours each day, last week with the King, and the Sculptor [and] he walked an hour each day and seemed every way well and cheerful. David Wilkie being asked on his return how he liked his trip answered: "Why, I begin to get inured to the thing." Chantrey said the King's kindness to Wilkie was beautiful. Your picture has an honourable place in the Gallery between Pitt and Eldon.

When at Brighton I saw a good deal of Lord Goderich, who, out of office, is an excellent person. He told me he was going to Huskisson's at Eltham on a shooting party, to meet Palmerston, Grant, Lewis; in short, all Huskey's tail, *and* Planta—that rat double-twisted who is suspected to have been negotiating this Summer between the Duke [of Wellington] and the said Huskisson. Perhaps some news may come of this. On the other hand, I hear old Eldon is after playing the devil unless he is taken in as President or Privy Seal, which the Duke, wishing to rule alone, demurreth to. Lord Eldon never stood so high as now, for Lyndhurst has effectually done the business of a foil to him in his Court. The Opposition papers are beginning to drop hints that old Bags [*i.e.*, Lord Eldon] after all was the Lawyer, and as for arrears—he did more work at his worst in a week than the successor in 6 months.

A "rat" and a "puppy"

I have got the new Grandpapa's tales (no copy arrived, however, either from you or Cadell), and we are devouring them with delight. You have opened an inexhaustible field, and I am sure as pleasant as even that of romance. . . Moore dined here yesterday. He is beginning to print his *Byron*. *Pelham* is writ by a Mr. Bulwer, a Norfolk squire and horrid puppy.[2] I have not read the book, from

[1] Despite the zeal to see comfortable shoes as quickly filled as they might have been here, Lockhart's prediction that no fat sinecure would ever come his way was fulfilled, save for a small Government office given in 1843—and that below his expectations.

[2] Afterwards Bulwer-Lytton. Scott had written to Lockhart: "Pray who writes *Pelham*. I found it very interesting; the light is easy and gentleman-like, the dark very grand and sombrous. There are great improbabilities, but what can a poor devil do? There is, I am sorry to say, a slang tone of morality which is immoral."

disliking the author; but shall do so since you approve it. A Fashionable Novel is, in general, a sad dose.—Yours always,

J. G. LOCKHART.

From the same

[LONDON,]
Monday, Nov. 9, '29.

MY DEAR SIR,—I presume this will find you in Edinburgh, having crossed Sophia somewhere or other between Abbotsford and Langholm. I hope and trust she will come safe to hand, and think in all likelihood the experience of Gooch and Co. may be able to perfect her care. She will have the satisfaction of seeing Johnny much better than when he left you. He is able not only to walk but actually to hop and run. I have him here with me in consequence of a brain fever which broke up the tranquillity of Wilson's domicile at Wandsworth; but has now happily yielded to tonsure and the ice cap.

I cannot get Tom Purdie [1] out of my head for ten minutes. I am sure there are not half-a-dozen people beyond immediate connections in the world whose death would have given me so much pain. What then must it be with you. Poor fellow I think the woods will never look the same again: but I hope in time Swanstown or some other of the same honest breed may come in a measure to supply his place.

I hear the negotiations between the Duke and Huskisson were suspended by some difficulties as to Palmerston; but that they are pretty sure to be renewed and completed before the Parliament assembles. I suppose so. Everybody says Peel is anxious to take the first decent opportunity of going to the H. of Lords.

Apsley House, the seat of the Duke of Wellington, looks very grand. It is to be opened in splendour next week, they say. The King is mad enough to be dreaming of dressing the Guards now, and afterwards all the Infantry in *blue*. This is the D[uke] of Cumberland's Prussian nonsense. Chantrey has been down arranging the bronze statues that used to be at Hampton, Kensington &c. in a New French Garden under the old terrace. He gave us a laughable description the other night of his majesty's forenoon council—himself about the statues; and Wardrop about

Dressing the Guards

[1] Officially Sir Walter's wood-forester. But more than that—for 22 years a humble and sincere friend, as Scott recorded on his tomb-stone. When his master was made a Baronet, Purdie, in his pride, immediately and on his own initiative, marked every sheep on the estate with a large S in front of the owner's initials W.S. stamped on their backs. Scott loved to tell this story.

the stuffing of the Camelopard on one side of the bed, the D[uke] of Cumberland and a tailor on the other.[1] The King in a white cotton nightcap and a rather dirty flannel jacket, propped up with pillows, and sipping his chocolate amidst this divan. The Duke of Wellington is announced. His Majesty gets on forthwith a black velvet cap with a gold tassel and a grand blue silk douillette, and walks into the next room to receive him in the character of George the Fourth. After half an hour (he had bid them all remain) he came back, and tumbled into bed again among them, to resume the discussion on the blue breeches. But this is all treason. Love to Anne.—Ever affectionately yours,

J. G. L.

From the same

LONDON,
the 17th May, 1830.

MY DEAR SIR,—As we expect so very soon to be with you it seems absurd to be writing, but Charles is sending a packet at any rate—*Ergo*. It appears to be not unlikely that the King may struggle against his malady for days, or even for weeks yet, but none can wish the period of such pain and humiliation to be extended. He is said to be as is usual in certain dropsical cases, a nuisance to all about him; and by every account, when sufficiently alive to be aware of anything expresses his earnest desire to be released. But for two or three days he has rarely recognized anybody. The story goes universally that when first warned of the nature of his case he, among other letters of solemnity, addressed one to Mrs. Fitzherbert authorizing her to set herself right with the world forthwith after his death by its publication.[2]

Mrs. Fitzherbert

The moment the King dies Parliament will be prorogued for a month, and then meet to settle a prospective Regency in case of the death of William IV during Princess Victoria's minority. Here is the grand struggle. The Duke of Wellington wishes the Duchess of Kent (which is following the precedent of George 2'ds arrangements on the death of Frederick). The Duke of Cumberland is

[1] We have heard of the Duke's tailoring enthusiasm from Scott's son (page 33).

[2] Had the tastes of Maria Anne Fitzherbert run to poetry instead of mere husbands (of whom George IV was the third) she might have completed her triumph over the deserted beauty "Perdita" Robinson, who consoled herself with literature. What an affecting Ode could Maria have written on Royal constancy when George IV returned to her ample charms after a further adventure in marriage. As the King lay dying, Mrs. Fitzherbert's portrait round his neck, he received from her a letter which he read with emotion, put it under his pillow, and then forgot it. No answer came to Mrs. Fitzherbert, says Wilkins, her biographer, who had access to the papers left undestroyed.

furious, *per contra*: but it seems to be considered that the anti-Wellingtonians will move not for *him* but for adjournment, wishing to have the chances of a new Parliament—on the composition of which truly the settlement or non-settlement of this very question might have no little influence. It is said that the King has drawn up a Will in which he strongly marks his wish that everything should be left to the Duke of Wellington. And it is also generally believed that our friend the Invisible has made sure of his ground at Bushy—that is, is to be Privy Purse under the next reign also. I can easily believe both of these stories. Meantime the D[uke] of Clarence is in a state of nervous excitement which renders it highly probable that we shall need a Regent before there be another demise of the crown. . .[1]

The Whigs, notwithstanding all the Duke's weak and timid concessions, are getting hourly more bitter; and Lord Althorp has now dealt his blow twice at the jugular. His band of 100 is, alone, a very formidable opposition, for it is well known to consist of men who do not want peace. Everybody looks to see Lord Goderich in the Cabinet very speedily. He has been speaking well and often on the Duke's side, and thus separated himself widely from Huskisson and Palmerston—who, I suppose, will mount Whig colours openly next session. The great Tories except Newcastle seem to have been mollified considerably of late—nay I need not except the Newcastles even for Sadler, their oracle, has wholly altered his tone. I sat by him at dinner the other day, and was surprised to hear him speaking of Peel so softly as he did. Such is the climate of St. Stephen's.

You will be glad to hear that I have begun at least to make a little money. During the last twelve months I have, one way or another, cleared upwards of £5000; and do not perceive any reason that it should be otherwise next. Under these circumstances do you think I should be justified in aspiring to a seat in the next H. of Commons? One can hardly live so continually among those gamesters, as I have been doing, without wishing to take a hand sometimes. But I should feel no gratification in coming in otherwise than at liberty to play for myself. . .[2]—Ever truly yours,

J. G. LOCKHART.

[1] The struggle was settled by the Act of 1830, the Duchess of Kent (unless she married a foreigner) to be Regent in the event of the Princess Victoria succeeding to the Crown during her minority, which did not occur.

[2] But Lockhart did not take up the dice. Scott, in his reply, was rather more cautious than in his own affairs: if Lockhart was sure of keeping up his income before spending the profit of a successful year, he highly approved.

From BENJAMIN ROBERT HAYDON

c/o The King's Bench Prison.

July 1, 1823 : He borrows £900—Picture exhibitions fail—Panic—Barricades his house against bailiffs—Agonizing scenes—Surrender and sale of his beautiful home—In prison.

July 12, 1823 : Acknowledges help from Scott—Promises a picture—Wilkie's fickle friendship—Raeburn's example—A way out of his trouble.

August, 1823 : Freedom after tormenting formalities—Condemned debtors' farewells—A fresh start.

July 31, 1827 : In prison again—The famous Mock Election scene.

Jan. 22, 1828 : Fortune smiling once more—Curious reminiscences of his childhood—Early life in London—Criticism of Hazlitt—Byron, and the Hunts—Keats's ruin.

May 22, 1830 : In distress again—Appeal to Scott—The King's patronage diverted—Dirty intrigue.

BENJAMIN ROBERT HAYDON (1786–1846)

c/o The King's Bench Prison

In the background of the 18th and 19th centuries loom those tragi-comic places, the King's Bench Prison and Rules, with their attendant groups of fawning bailiffs and motley debtors, libellers, and criminals. When a man of writs comes to seize the chattels of Lord Byron, there is a friendly little talk about business. "Anything for Sheridan?"—asks the poet—"Oh, Sheridan," replies the bailiff, "my lord, I have been in Sheridan's house a twelvemonth at a time—a civil gentleman—knows how to deal with *us*." Not everyone managed so well these payable guests; who, fattening upon their desperate hosts, wander so familiarly in and out the Lives and Letters of the times. It was often a nice point who were the greatest rogues—the creditors, or the debtors, or the minions of the law. Certainly the last were not least. The gamble was the maddest when it came to the King's Bench Prison. There, for example, a poor wretch might starve to death or become a jibbering madman among the less ingenious herds; or else contrive the means to join that derelict society among which we may see, in contemporary prints, the powdered sisters of Becky Sharp under their parasols, and the faded but ever-gallant Captain Crawleys, racquets in hand, parading the courts or lounging in the wine-room. Of course, if the resident preferred not to join this "society" he might manage to work—the drunken chorus of a neighbouring party permitting. While some of our correspondents have been writing to Scott, Cobbett in prison has been carrying on his "Political Register"; Combe (in The Rules) writing *Dr. Syntax*; and Leigh Hunt—between the visits of Byron, Moore, and Lamb—editing the "Examiner," and putting the Debtors' Prison into Literature for all time—as did Dickens and others later. It is now the turn of an artist—not the first by a long brush—an artist acclaimed as a genius and glorified in the verse of Keats, Lamb, and this same Hunt.

Enter, with tipstaff, the mortified and indignant Benjamin Robert Haydon.

If all the so-called geniuses of the 18th and 19th centuries were entitled to the verdict which the claim implies, the gods worked overtime at their birth, Parnassus was to be over-populated, and Art required a new dimension. And if ever a man was one of these geniuses by self-conviction, by the fervour of ambition, by the praise of immortals, it was Haydon. He lived for his art and his principles : poured out his volcanic energy for them. But he must overwhelm them in a lava of letters and talk. His first meeting with Shelley is illustrative. Shelley opens the conversation by referring to " that detestable religion, the Christian——." " I felt," says Haydon, " like a stag at bay, and resolved to gore without mercy." Again : in the course of a dispute with that patron of the arts Sir George Beaumont—" In the drawing-room," records the artist, " Lady Beaumont was enchanting. Patting my arm, with the engaging pressure which sets a man on the *qui vive*, she rallied me on the propriety of docility in early life." As well wave a red cloth to stop a bull, as to restrain the impetuous Haydon, with his big body and short legs, and torrential ideas.

The tragedy for the artist was that the world did not sufficiently understand the inspiration of those huge canvases of his, nor since then have the worthier judges been even as enthusiastic as his contemporaries over some of them. Yet when the worst is said of his fierce egoism, of his intolerance, of his greed, of his unbridled belief that his historical conceptions and his theories would open a new epoch in British art, he remains one of the remarkable men of his time. The fame that he fought for so passionately has come to him in spite of the failure of his ambitions. Leave his huge paintings where, perhaps, they may be only historical curiosities—his studies have more value and appeal—his fight for the national purchase of the Elgin marbles was not in vain ; his teaching of such artists as Bewick, Eastlake, and the Landseers has its recognition ; his stand for artistic principles was not without its effect. And, above all, there is his Autobiography—a fascinating document which secures him his most enduring place—this and the story of his tortured life in which the cruellest torturer was B. R. Haydon.

If he was unhappy in easily making enemies, he was richly blessed in his friendships. Yet even these he strained. That with Keats—one of the noblest in literature—is an idyll turned into an agony. To Keats, the artist was " the glorious Haydon and all his creation " : to Haydon, Keats was " the poet of high

calling "—and in fairness to him let it be said that while the friendship burned with so pure a flame he was an inspiration to the young poet. But the inevitable blot falls upon the fair page. Haydon, although he often earned a thousand pounds a year, was always at desperation point to keep his beautiful wife, his children, his home, and " my glorious Art." Money he must have from whomsoever might appear to be less embarrassed. There is a noble letter from Keats in which he pleads : " Believe me, dear Haydon, I have that sort of fire in my heart that would sacrifice everything I have to your service. I will do this sooner than you shall be distressed, but let me be the last stay. Ask the rich lover of Art first." The poet did help the artist. But in the end thirty pieces of gold was the significant sum paid when the affinity was shattered. It is after this memorable story has reached its bitter end that occurs the correspondence of Haydon with Scott, who thought the painter a clever fellow, " Imprudent probably, but who is not ? "—this from the man who found himself faced with £130,000 of debt : a mountain of trouble to the artist's anthill. The friendship is put to the usual strain. Haydon's letters here, written pell-mell as usual, show him characteristically brave, honest and ever confident, and ever in trouble. Four times did his debts take him to the King's Bench Prison, whose sad Bohemia and the *Mock Election* picture it inspired (it was bought by George IV) are described for Sir Walter. As for the letter of Jan. 22, 1828, in which he recalls Hazlitt, Byron, Leigh Hunt, Keats, and others, apart from the new biographical interest, it supplies some new and valuable notes to that masterpiece—his Autobiography.

From Benjamin Robert Haydon

KING'S BENCH PRISON,
July 1st, 1823.

LITTLE did I suppose, when writing to you, Sir Walter, for Godwin,[1] I should soon be in a worse condition myself : a Cloud of Calamity burst on me like a water spout, unexpected and unthought of ! But for the follies of others I would gradually have extricated myself. I write you for no other purpose but to unburthen my mind to you, and as you may hear all sorts of reports, to tell you the truth.

A pupil of mine, a man of considerable fortune, instead of attending to his studies, wanted to combine Art and Commerce. With a handsome income he still could not get rid of an itching for city speculations, having originally been a merchant himself, and in spite

[1] *i.e.*, William Godwin, whose daughter Mary eloped with Shelley and whose step-daughter " Claire " was the mother of Byron's Allegra. He speaks for himself in a later group of letters.

of my continual entreaty, his original habits were so rooted that I soon saw he would by paying only a little attention to both occupations do nothing of any consequence in either. Seeing me pressed in money matters, he offered me help, and procured most generously 900£ from a House in the city in which he used always to keep his own balances. Of course a House which benefited by occasionally speculating with his money very readily attended to his wishes. *The Entry into Jerusalem* was made over as security, and from Dublin was expected at least 500£.[1] The moment they (the Partners) took this picture into their hands, a Fate seemed to attend it. 80£ was *lost* at Dublin, 25 at Bristol, 10 at Birmingham, and 40 only gained at Liverpool, whereas from Edin and Glasgow alone I had received 1000£. Though disappointed, they were not alarmed. This young man by his ridiculous speculations, in land, houses, corn, and everything in which money could be spent, so shook their confidence, that I plainly saw I should be called on for the money. At last in order to make up his losses (for he had dreadfully diminished his fortune), he plunged into Spanish *Scrip*, a sudden panic seized the holders, and my worthy pupil lost 5000£ in two or three days (in addition to his other misfortunes),[2] drew all the money he had out of the hands of his friends, and left himself in *their debt* besides the debt I had incurred with them by his desire to serve me. They now sent to me for the *Entry into Jerusalem* (their security) and which I sent, and packed up myself ; and the moment they got this Picture into the City, they, without any warning or notice, put an execution in on *Lazarus*, which was bringing me 17, 18 and 20 [£] a day and had produced me 32 and 33 [£] a day ! I had sent them 100 [£] all I could spare and all I had left. At the West end of the Town this was ruin ! Three executions followed in my House, besides 3 or 4 arrests. I was taken out of my bed, and escaped home again, barricaded the door, and arranged all my private papers. Such scenes in the House, My dear Sir Walter ! Reptiles, intoxicated with tobacco and beer, rolling about under the *Ilyssus* and jesting on its naked beauty ! My painting room, where none but rank and talent had ever trod, was now stenched with the sleeping heat of low-lived beasts, slumbering in blankets ! At the foot too of the *Crucifixion* [3] which I had just rubbed in !

Brutal bailiffs

[1] This large picture *Christ's Entry into Jerusalem* is now in Cincinnati.

[2] This is an example of the get-rich-quick mania of the time, which was indirectly to bring disaster to Sir Walter.

[3] He worked on this large canvas intermittently from probably 1804 to 1831. It was left unfinished.

They drank my wine; they plundered the property they were protecting; they quarrelled with the servants! My blood was boiling half the day, and I declare solemnly, one night, infuriated with anxiety and agony at seeing the state of my Wife and the pining look of my infant in consequence of its mother's condition, had I met either of the parties, I would have strangled him like a rabbit. I set out to look for them, and lucky for myself I met none! I really would have done it. I would have crushed him like paper! I was obliged to surrender, and was transferred to this sink of dimness and gamblers.

My property was sold. What cost me (and it was all paid for) 2300£, fetched 600£! My Picture *The Entry*, which had produced nearly 3000 in shillings, was bought by this very pupil for 220! And *Lazarus*, for which I refused 1000 shortly after it opened, for 350 to my own Upholsterer.[1]

I assure you, Sir Walter, my home was the happiest on Earth—loving and beloved by a beautiful creature, blessed with a star of an infant, as beautiful as its dear mother; occupied with a glorious pursuit, and enjoying daily proof from all parts of the World of great reputation; wandering about my study after the day's labour, and feeding my mind with casts from the Productions of the finest times of Greece and Rome. Though harrassed by difficulties in consequence of not selling my two last Pictures, I lived in a comparative Paradise! Had my House [been] filled with [not] hangings, [but] Plate and wine, it would have been fair prey for Creditors; but [to] sell the [? studies] of an artist brought them nothing and ruined me.

Contrasts

The horror I felt at first coming here has subsided, and I found two or three friends I knew in affluence when a boy. But prisoners of any description and for any cause have certainly a marked look—a lounging undress, a sorry and deep attention to every trifling thing that occurs from the idle indifference to any thing serious, and a boisterous merriment.

I am often awoke in the middle of the night by the whole company singing "God Save the King," and yesterday I was called to my window by a great noise, when on looking out I saw at least half the people, shouting and pursuing a poor little rat that had darted across the racket ground!

Some few, indeed, overwhelmed by their misfortunes stir out only in the dark; and, by their solitary stride, seem brooding on

[1] This picture, 14 ft. by 21 ft., is in the Tate Gallery.

their troubles. There are many who were at Waterloo and the Peninsula, without half pay for want of protection, speculators of all sorts—from the great miner [*i.e.*, ? mine owner] to the Historical Painter; men also [who] have embarqued thousands in hopes of a vein of copper and, notwithstanding they are now in the Bench, daily draw plans how such estates could be made to bring in their possession double: if they would but risk a little on a vein of coal! This is simply what daily passes—without exaggeration! I see many heads, fine studies; and if it please God to bring me through my difficulties, I do not despair of turning what I see here to account.

His fellow-prisoners

I hope you will excuse this long letter. My object in writing you proceeded from a desire to inform one, whom I venerate, of the exact truth.—With great respect,

B. R. HAYDON.

From the same

KING'S BENCH,
Saturday, July 12th, 1823.

DEAR SIR WALTER SCOTT,—I have this moment received your affectionate letter, and while my heart and feelings are burning at its kind nature, I will answer it. I assure you, I give you my honor, I had no notion of asking or of expecting any pecuniary help. I felt pleasure in unburthening my sorrows to you: you had treated me with distinction and honored me by your praise. I venerated your genius; I felt a pleasure in exciting your sympathy by a simple relation of the truth. You have chosen to aid me: I am very grateful for it, and will remember the way in which it was done to the day of my Death. Be assured, dear Sir Walter, I will paint a Sketch and do my best to send you such a one in oil as will, I hope, not diminish at least your opinion of my talents.

Poor Sir Henry Raeburn![1] What a life this is. After all the gaiety of such a jaunt as yours, which I will venture to say doubled all your old feelings of Friendship and caused you to anticipate the remembrance of the jaunt with many merry associations, to be slit assunder in this way, fills one's soul with unexpressible pangs. There is nothing in this World in my humble opinion worthy [of] immortality but the fine attachments of Friendship and the passion for a lovely creature beloved and loving!

I don't wish to cant, but these are my genuine sensations—most genuine. There was one Man in earlier life, for whose talents and for whose sake I would have stood before a battery of cannon;

[1] He died earlier this year.

but at the first touch of Misfortune's withering hand, he shrunk as if the poison was infectious ! [1] Unexpectedly I extricated myself, he was again my Friend, my visitor, my admirer. His Friendship at last grew warm in success, and always failed in trouble. Is it not dreadful to have the best feelings of an heart thus chilled from the selfishness of others ? I have often suffered more from the want of expected sympathy than from any other cause in the World ; and when I meet it *really* my feelings of gratitude and regard are passionate. The greatest of all blessings is certainly in marriage ; it eases your heart at once of all the disappointments of early Friendship ; it looks to me like the sacred blessing of a Providence pitying the fate of mankind ! It is the only pure unadulterated relick left of lost Paradise. Yet I presume to think that men are more disposed to good than to evil on Earth, but notwithstanding there is more misery than happiness, and that the worst have a saving something in their nature that makes us all akin. Pardon my talking to such a diver into human hearts and failings as you are, Sir Walter. Sir Henry Raeburn's death, who seemed a kind, hearty affectionate man, made me remember all my old thoughts.

David Wilkie

I can assure you my Solicitors are honorable men, and I have laid open everything to them to five pounds. I fear in a commercial country like this, a man suffers in character by taking the Act. God knows I do it to protect myself from the tyranny of individuals, so that those who are disposed to be kind shall have as good a chance to be paid ultimately as those who are merciless. The Law has been so freely used against me, that I think I have a right to [use] it in my favor. It is a delight to me that you seem to think so. Your view of my case is very consoling ; depend on it I will exert every nerve : my capital they shall not destroy. My dearest Mary's health is excellent, my child is well, and so am I ; and I will follow Sir Henry Raeburn's example, I assure you, dear Sir Walter, and not consider life hopeless because I am ashore for the present. While I have the regard of such men as you, I need be content. With my kindest respects to Lady Scott and Mrs. Lockhart,—Believe me dear Sir Walter Scott, ever your grateful Servant,

B. R. Haydon.

Should I need your advice I shall not scruple, after your offer, to ask it. Every thing is in progress. It is the advice of all to take the protection of the Act. If I was to be assisted to pay what

[1] Apparently Haydon refers to the painter Sir David Wilkie. See his remarkable letter of Jan. 22, 1828, page 172 *et seq.*

I am detained for, I should be harrassed again. It is the best way to put *all* on a line, so that *all* may be equally treated. I do think an English Merchant at the smell of money the most ferocious in pursuit of any thing on Earth—that is, if he fears to lose it. But I can't say this of all merchants.

[After receiving Scott's financial help and advice, Haydon regained his freedom through the Insolvent Court—" out of 150 creditors, not one opposed me," says his Autobiography. And he writes :]

From the same 8, PHILPOT TERRACE, EDGWARE ROAD,
[LONDON, Aug. 1823.]

DEAR SIR WALTER,—I am released, and passed through the ordeal of the Court, I hope, with honor. Out of a vast number of Creditors not one opposed me ; and only one entered his name, a scoundrel of a Usurer, who insinuated himself into my confidence some years ago. But to the disappointment of my Counsel, my Solicitor, and myself, his courage failed him at the moment, and the Public has lost a fine exposure of a merciless reptile. I think if he had stood up, his examination would have afforded a fine example to young men who accept offered money from such people.

About an hour after I was in Court my name was loudly called. I stood up, and after a little, I turned gently towards the Spectators. Every face was turned to me, and the Councellors, with their piercing legal ferretting look, seemed examining me at their leisure. My heart beat violently when the Judge in the mildest voice asked me a question or two, when I bowed and stepped down. After being thus freed I was obliged to be detained by the neglect of a messenger who had gone to York Assizes without having made the proper affidavit for the delivery of notices to Creditors. I declare I suffered more during these three days than all the rest of the time I had been confined. I tormented myself with apprehensions lest the Coach should upset, and break the messenger's neck. I felt very grand, talked of his carelessness as if I had the power to punish him, and laid my head on my pillow every night with a conviction [that] reform in the Court was requisite when an innocent man's liberty depended on the drunken carelessness of a thoughtless messenger. So great a man had the Judge's dictum made me in a few hours !

Free, but not released

Believe me, dear Sir Walter, you were the first person that I remembered with grateful feeling, the moment the passion of joy at embracing my dearest Mary and Child free had subsided. I

thought of you and spoke of you with pride, and I sit down to write you, now that I am recovered from the drowziness with which the trees, fields, and streets affected me at finding I was not restrained by a Wall. But I have certainly no right to complain of any thing during my imprisonment. I was treated with respect, and was allowed to go up to Court on passing my word. As I was leaving the Prison, the poor Debtors crowded round the entrance like condemned souls, and heartily wished me success; and on my return congratulated me with equal sincerity. I left them with regret—like leaving a Ship, in which you have sailed, when she is sinking. In the Prison we were all unfortunate: some by his own fault, but most, I found, by the rascality of others; and I must own the sympathy of these poor men gave me a melancholy pleasure I shall not forget.

The debtors' farewell

The Proprietor of *Lazarus* intends shortly to send it to Edinburgh. I will venture to say it will meet with more approbation than any Picture I have painted. I shall wish to hear what you think of it, when it does come. As soon as I get settled, I shall soon be at my Canvas; but it requires all my reflection to know exactly what to do. Sir H. Raeburn had nothing to do but proceed as he had proceeded, while my plan has brought on my ruin; and to begin a new Course after 19 years devotion to one which is the great delight of my heart is a painful duty.[1]—With affectionate respect,

B. R. Haydon.

[Haydon's affairs were now straightened out on his undertaking to devote himself to the more profitable work of portrait-painting, which he considered degrading. He made an honest effort which was not very successful, and turned again to his ambitious historical conceptions. By February 1826 the news of Scott's financial disaster was well known in London; and among the many who were deeply concerned was Haydon; who, "as a mark of my gratitude and a memento of your feeling and heart," wrote announcing that the sketch in oils he was to execute (apparently the one mentioned in the previous letter) was now ready, and would be sent after it had been exhibited. It was the original study for his picture *Pharaoh*; and it remains to-day among the treasures at Abbotsford. But all this time another "Cloud of Calamity" was gathering over the head of the imprudent artist. It burst the following year, just when his beautiful and adoring wife was about to be confined. Lockhart in London was rushed to the rescue; Scott, himself hard pressed, sent more money; and once again the artist escaped from the King's Bench Prison—but this time with unforgettable scenes engraved in his mind. Here is part of his letter of July 31, 1827, announcing the

[1] Scott had held up the example of his friend Raeburn; who, when a lad, painted miniature water-colours. He married a wealthy widow, studied art in Rome, and became the fashionable portrait-painter of the day.

conception of those scenes for his great picture *The Mock Election*, which was acquired by the King for 500 guineas, and which now hangs in St. James' Palace.]

50 CONNAUGHT TCE. [LONDON].

. . . "WHILE in Prison, disheartened as I was, I was perpetually drawn to the Window by a scene that beggars all description—the Mock Election. If you had seen the High Sheriff, Sir Walter, you never would have forgotten him! a tall Irishman with a face that had the keenness of Moliere and the humour of Rabelais. His dress was a long dressing-gown which had once been new, his cuffs turned up as a sort of uniform, and two large holes in his elbows; a brass chain round his neck; an old chapeau (brass) on his head; a bunch of roses in his bosom; and for a staff, a mopstick ornamented with an empty bottle for a head!! Sir E. James, who as Lord High Sheriff, presented Mr. Pitt 30 years ago at Chigley, told me he did not do it half so well as this fellow (Sir E. James is now a prisoner himself). Baronets and bankers, young fellows of fashion and half-pay captains, merchants and authors, painters and editors—all crowded together looking on! I never shall forget it, and am determined to paint it. The contrast of humour and affliction and the boisterous merriment of those who were Prisoners was painful, yet the humour consisted in the contrast. . . If I succeed in making good a sketch of the Mock Election, I shall keep it for you—it will be apropos, considering *when* you aided me." .. .

The Mock Election scene

From the same

LONDON,
Jan. 22, 1828.

MY DEAR SIR WALTER,—I am sure you will [be] pleased to hear that my exhibition is increasing steadily in receipts and filling well, and that if I sell the picture in addition, I hope to meet my creditors with honor. I enclose you a Catalogue, which I hope you will not disapprove. It contains simple facts, and I will now let the matter rest for ever. I fear my connections in early life with Leigh Hunt and Hazlitt have done me irreparable injury. Pleased with Hunt's wit and Hazlitt's entertaining conversation, I did not sufficiently foresee that I should be mingled up with their opinions on Politicks, Religion and Morality—though I never in the whole course of all my life agreed with them in one single opinion on such subjects.[1] I was

[1] There was, perhaps, never another age like this when literature—and even art—was so much entangled with politics. Scott in his Journal a few months later is saying: "Haydon was once a great admirer and companion of the champions of the Cockney School, and is now disposed to renounce them and their opinions. A painter should have nothing to do with politics."

introduced by Wilkie, whose prudence and sagacity I wasted, for the moment he saw the consequences he withdrew and left me without caution or advice. I thought all the World would separate my pleasure at their conversation from my dislike of their principles, but I was soon mingled up as if I was one of the *set*: with whom I never had one common feeling. I wish Sir Walter very much that you would allow me to enter a little into my private history. I am the son of a Bookseller of Plymouth, and the lineal descendant of an ancient and honourable family, who lived on their landed property for centuries, and who are connected with the Grenvilles by marriage. From what cause I cannot exactly ascertain, but the family became ruined, and the estate at Cadhay in Devonshire was sold, and the children of the last Possessor obliged to get their living. One of my ancestors was a Judge in Edward 2nd ['s time]. In *Prince's Worthies of Devon* is a detailed account of the family. My Grandfather became Steward to Mr. Lavery, and by his prudence and integrity amassed a sufficient sum to set up a Bookseller's Shop in Plymouth about 86 years ago. My Father carried it on, and was well known for his loyalty and publick spirit, when Loyalty was no common virtue during the *French* Revolution. I remember when I was a boy hearing long discussions at Breakfast with a little hump-back Schoolmaster who was also a violent Republican, and who taught me to write; and my Father—who was always in good humour whenever this little fellow used to say any thing about Kings which my Father despised too much to answer—he used to get up before me and throw his leg over the head (without difficulty) of the little Republican. I have seen his little distorted face get red with passion!

In this school of John Bull feeling, I was brought up, and have never swerved in my feelings all my life. It is deuced hard, when all my time with Hunt and Hazlitt was passed in fast and furious discussions on Religion and Politicks in which I continually opposed them, as they know, to be accused, because I kept their company, of being of the same species. For my part I have always got something from all species of men. I am, in every sense of the word, as thorough a John Bull as ever breathed. I have been brought up with the Army and the Navy, have ever gloried in their successes; for my creed has ever been—always beat the French *first* and then negotiate. This comprehends the whole of my Politicks—and ever will. After being publickly attacked as if I am a colleague of these People, I felt too much contempt to deny it, for *they* know that I

With Hunt and Hazlitt

have separated from them for years on account of my dislike. But alas whatever I say about it will have the appearance of a recantation of principles I have always held in disgust—and I will venture to say that I and my children, will feel ever the consequences.

The wonder is, Sir Walter, how any young man coming to Town, as I did at 18 without caution or advice, did not walk into more scrapes than has been my lot. I was an only son, and always had my will—and fought for it, if I did not get it. I never knew the want of a wish ungratified. As for Hazlitt, the only hope, as they said of Rousseau, is that [he] is mad—a more unprincipled a passion in literature does not exist. At the very time he was coming to me and making me believe he had the highest regard, he had sent to Colburn a mass of perverse abuse, which they refused to print. When he was in distress, he asked me to buy his copies of the *Louvre* for 40 [£]. I gave him 50 to relieve him, and at the time we were ruined, and our property was sold. He told me with a *chuckle* that he should get his copies again for *nothing* ! They were bought for £2. 16. or some sum of that sort, and he keeps them as a triumph to gratify his *spite*, that I had the power to [assist] him ! Wordsworth [1] said you'll find him a fiend—and nothing was ever truer. Byron must have had a [full] dose with Hunt and his family. Hunt says in this book that Byron had no address after [being] attacked by a *Lady*—meaning of course *Mrs. Hunt.* He forgets that Lord Byron was perhaps too much disgusted—perhaps she occasionally picked her nose as she entertained his Lordship, as she used often to do when she attempted to entertain others. Oh, Sir Walter, what a delightful book *I* could write of *Leigh Hunt* and his companions as a pendant to *Lord Byron and his Contemporaries*, and I am not quite sure I won't. I should get nothing by it. One party would say I am a renegade, and the other would never believe me sincere, when the fact is I have never had but one opinion from the beginning.

Byron at Leigh Hunt's house

I have thus taken the liberty of stating to you some facts, my dear Sir Walter, in order that I may stand in your mind exactly as I am and ever have been. I have no paltry motive on Earth in doing so—it is merely from a love of Truth and a desire that you, whom I love and estimate so highly, should know the secrets of my own heart. I have been the victim of being mingled up with a

[1] The poet was a frequent visitor at Haydon's house, and sat to the artist, who has left some lively impressions of him.

set of people I despised for their grossness, immorality, and utter want of national feeling. But Leigh Hunt is like Sylla—grass never grows where he comes. His friendship is fatal: he ruined Keats, as Keats told me,[1] and he has tainted my fame and character and destroyed the fortune of his Brother, who really is an honest and noble character. It is too late for me to explain away, but to you and one or two others I write to tell the truth.—I am, dear Sir Walter, ever your grateful servant,

Keats's fatal friendship

B. R. HAYDON.

From the same

KING'S BENCH,
May 22, 1830.

AH! MY DEAR SIR WALTER,—Twice have you saved my family [from] starving when in Misfortune, and now again it has borne me down. Of the [£]1,760 I owed when Mr. Lockhart caused my rescue, I have paid out of my hard gains [£]732. 3/6 in the pound I paid the 1st Dividend, and the Man who has now imprisoned me I paid 7/–. I reduced his debt for schooling from [£]125 to [£]80, and he has mounted it again to [£]100. For the two advances of [£]20 each I painted you two sketches—*Pharaoh* and *Emily*. The *Emily* will be sent to Mr. Lockhart, and if you will help me this last time I will paint you the Xenophon sketch for the same amount. They won't rely on my honor, though I have proved it, and want to make me pay by Law when I can't. I will make [them] wait *my Law*, and then they shall see. My dearest Mary, you may imagine with 5 children, expects to have all the little comforts of a nursery torn from her, though if a year's rent and taxes were paid it might be saved.

All I beg, My dear Sir Walter, is help me with [£]20—ten at a time. I'll send you a sketch worth [£]50, and more. I am too bewildered to write more.[2]

The King would have bought [my] Paint[ing]. Here are the facts:—A person, who always has feared my coming near the King, came to me before my Exhibition opened, and said he had orders to see my pictures, [adding] if the King wishes to see them can it be managed? I said: "My gratitude is such I will move the whole Exhibition." He replied: "I must see *him first*."

[1] Keats, like many of his contemporaries, was the intimate friend and correspondent of Haydon; but whatever he told the artist in conversation, this statement is an exaggeration. It is true that the poet's friendship with Leigh Hunt declined.

[2] Scott's Diary under date May 24 says: "Letter from Mr. H[aydon] soliciting £20. Wait till Lockhart comes."

He went to Windsor: the first words the King said were: "Where are Haydon's Pictures." This person then explained it was my private day, and the Pictures were going to open to the Public, and a week's receipts *were an Object to me*—as if from me when, so help me Good Sir Walter, he had concealed from me that he had the *King's orders in his Pocket* to bring *Emily* and *Punch* down. His Majesty then ordered *Punch* to come at the end of the Week. He said he would not trouble me for *Emily*, and he saw the paint[ing] and sent it back without a word.

Victim of intrigue

This is so unlike him, I am sure he was displeased; and though I have taken every means to send the truth to him, I doubt if he knows it. I have fallen a victim to as dirty [a] piece of intrigue as ever afflicted a man. I have worked hard, and tried to deserve Fortune, but still she flits about with only an occasional, torturing, smile. Pardon this letter; who can one turn to but to those who have sympathised before. God Bless you,—Dear Mary and Frank's affectionate gratitude,

B. R. Haydon.

[There are no more appeals from Haydon in Sir Walter Scott's Letter-Books, which extend only a year further. Fortune continued to torture the artist, until the 22nd of June, 1846, when his daughter found him in his studio "stretched out dead, before the easel on which stood his unfinished picture of Alfred and the first British Jury, his white hairs dabbled in blood, a half-open razor smeared with blood at his side, near it a small pistol recently discharged, in his throat a frightful gash, and a bullet-wound in his skull." Just before laying himself before the British Jury he wrote in his Diary:

22nd.—God forgive me. Amen.

Finis
of
B. R. Haydon.

Stretch me no longer on this rough world.—*Lear*.]

BYRON

From J. B. S. Morritt .	Lady Holland's *pot-de-chambre*—Byron as Childe Harold—Scott urged to secure him a flogging.
Lady Alvanley .	The attack on Lord Elgin—Byron's *amende honorable* to the Hollands.
Samuel Rogers .	Byron vindicates his wife—Sheridan's death-bed distress.
C. K. Sharpe. .	Satire on *Manfred.*
J. B. S. Morritt .	Shelley at Oxford—His conquests and life with Byron—The poet's criticism of English women—A young lord runs away from home.
Lord Byron . .	Acknowledges Scott's kindness—The world and his own wife against him—Only three champions—The dedication of *Cain*—Threatens Southey—Scott's novels his favourites—Mrs. Lockhart's charms—Invitation to Italy.
Lady Anne Barnard	Venison for Scott—Interviews Byron's valet—News of the dead poet—His cruelty—Admiration for Scott.
M. Phillips . .	Byron helps a poor author.
John Wilson Croker	The Boswell Papers—Moore's *Life* of Byron.
C. K. Sharpe. .	Tommy Moore the toad—An old ditty—Lies in the *Life* of Byron—Comparison with Lord Rochester—Sharpe thrust under the grate—Byron and Lady Keith.
Nathan T. Rosseter.	Mysterious Byron letters and MSS. offered to Scott.

BYRON

THE cloaked figure has already cast its shadow across this correspondence. Byron himself now enters with jest, gibe, and bitterness, and (what is more) an impressive respect and affection for Scott such as he had for no other man. He enters in the midst of a group of letters characteristic of the extraordinary interest of the age in its news and views of the wicked fellow. That he does not occupy the whole stage of this chapter—as normally he would—is because some "vile inhospitable scoundrel," lionising at Abbotsford, stole most of the letters received by Sir Walter from the "noble imp of fame," before the Letter-Books were bound up. As it is, his letter stands out from this group like Gulliver among the Lilliputians. And yet the pages by Scott's other correspondents help to provide our contemporary background, for the writers were either personal friends or moving within the whirlwind of the Byronic cloak. Rumour was not tardily served in the days of such correspondents, especially when Byron was the object. For example, an unpublished letter from Venice enables Joanna Baillie in Hampstead to inform Scott at Abbotsford that Byron has "become very fat, his face being as round as a cheese, and his body somewhat of the form of a large china jar that we have in our drawing-room." The agitated spinsters, siding with Lady Byron, probably thought this was proper revenge on the beautiful pale-faced Don Juan. The world and his wife were voraciously reading all that the naughty poet wrote; and particularly did the wife devour *Don Juan* the more its naughtiness was abused, as the author observed. And the more they devoured the more they supported the then mysterious cause of the poor lady—the details of which were wholly conjecture, and therefore the abominations of all abominations. The separation of the poet from his wife,[1] who once suspected that he was insane, had meant self-banishment "from the country to which he is an honour," wrote Scott, whose heart "bleeds when I think of him."

Morritt comes first, with a story Byron would have delighted

[1] Byron was 27 years of age when he married, in 1815, the daughter of Sir Robert Milbanke. A year later came the separation, and then the deluge of obloquy.

to use, for he had an old grudge against the Hollands. All the letters are *ex parte*; but the second is authoritative enough. It is from Samuel Rogers, the banker-poet, whose most successful work was the *Pleasures of Memory*; but who has a niche in the safe-deposit of Literature more by reason of the memory of his pleasures, since it was his good fortune to be an intimate of all the contemporary celebrities; and whose *Jacqueline* had the loan of half Byron's mantle when she minced into the first edition in company with the Don's *Lara*. The satire which that curious but lovable recluse Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe sends to Scott shows how Byron's poetry provoked that amazing bibliography of rhymed attacks, defences, imitations, continuations, and forgeries, which is at once the delight and despair of the student. And the game reaches its climax when we find Lady Anne Barnard, famous for her "Auld Robin Gray" ballad, receiving the poet's servant for the obvious purpose of a delicate investigation such as the love affairs of Queen Caroline had made fashionable.

The coffee-house gossip, the scandal, the satires, could be dispensed with as small beer were it not for two considerations: the first, that all are so linked up with the personality of the poet and all so influenced his writings; the second, that here they accentuate the profoundly admirable circumstance of the friendship between Scott and Byron. Sir Walter, writing to Lady Alvanley about Byron's reconciliation with the Prince Regent, recalled an honest old Presbyterian who thought it right to speak with respect even of the devil himself, since no one knew in what corner he might one day want a friend. The Northern Bard had come under the Byronic lash in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* (for which there was later—and again here—a handsome apology); worse—or rather better, in view of the Waverley Novels—he had been supplanted as the world's darling poet by Byron. So thus he had no cause to love his rival. Yet Scott promptly and in the most generous terms acclaimed him; and the younger man—bitter, suspicious, flouting the world—just as promptly and with what looks uncommonly like relief—accepted the hand and verdict of his high rival. No holding the candle here! From just after the time that Byron wrote (1813) "If they want to depose Scott, I only wish they would not set me up as a competitor. I like the man and admire his works"—to Scott's entry in his Diary—

> There will be many pens
> Ere such another Byron—

their relations in an age of bitter literary feuds and treasons were those of noble friendship, born of mutual recognition of the other's genius, the recollection of which is a necessary preface here because among those who tried persistently to influence Scott against his brother poet are some of the writers of the following letters.

From J. B. S. Morritt

[LONDON,]
April, 1812.

MY DEAR SCOTT,—Do you not remember a Story you once told me of the Offence given to the national feelings of Lucky Finlayson by a certain silver travelling companion of Lady Holland's? I remember the communication with the highest gratitude, and as another adventure has recently befallen this celebrated *pot-de-chambre*, I hasten to discharge *quantum in me est* the obligation I have felt by acquainting you with it. This little appendage of domestic luxury has become so essential to her ladyship's comfort that it always attends her when she leaves Holland House. It was lately of her party in a visit she made to one of her South country friends, at whose house she proposed to stay for a few days. Her Ladyship, disdaining the China substitute which her friend had provided for her accommodation, paid her devotions exclusively to this old favorite. In the morning after her arrival the chamber-maid of the house carried her ladyship's favorite to the under-butler, as she said it was *his* business to clean *plate*, and she could not be expected to understand it. The under-butler appealed to the Major domo, alleging that a *pot-de-chambre*, though of silver, did not fall within his jurisdiction. The ladies and gentlemen of the second and third tables broke into feuds, and being unable to agree in the decision of the housekeeper or butler, the parties in procession carried the subject in dispute to their master and mistress, who have ever since been as angry as Lucky Finlayson at the fastidiousness of her Ladyship. I did not hear how this important affair was decided; but the family returned immediately to Holland House, carrying back with them the cause of the dissention. Here ends the second part of the adventures of the Dame of the Silver Chalice. . .[1]

A story of Lady Holland

[1] Scott replied to Morritt with this story: "There is a huge implement of this metal at Arniston not reserved for the commodity of any individual, but usually brought in after dinner, when there is a large company, for the general use and benefit. It chanced one unlucky day that there was a good deal of singing after dinner, which detained the ladies some time longer in the eating room than usual. The bell was rung for some purpose or other, when, to the utter astonishment and confusion of all present, the ancient Butler, having no doubt that it was the well-

All the world here are admiring and wondering at a new poem by Lord Byron *The Pilgrimage of Childe Harold*.[1] It is of all the works I have lately seen the most creditable to the poet and the least so to the man. The plan is simply the description of his own tour thro' Spain and Greece, in the character of Childe Harold, a young nobleman who " through Sin's long Labyrinth had run " and who from the fulness of Satiety carried his jaded feelings into distant climes, where all he sees is of course tinged with the gloom of his own mind. Tho' he disavows the identity of his own character with that of Childe Harold, it is impossible to believe him, and the Childe is really a very naughty quarrelsome spoilt child. The descriptions are however so spirited, and the sentiments, however gloomy and mischievous, are so powerful and drest in such brilliant poetry that I have hardly laid the book down without longing to take it up again for a week. This is certainly a compliment from me, because I hate the character that is thus pourtrayed. There are five or six beautiful Stanzas to prove that there is no future state, and many more of equal beauty to shew that the present state is intolerable; and the good plain reason assigned for this moral is in fact no more than this: that flatterers at the board and whores in bed become very tedious and unprofitable by frequent repetition: *ergo* Providence has made us all miserable, and we delude ourselves by expecting ever to be otherwise. Pray if you can persuade Gifford to review this book. The beauties of the poetry are such as to put it quite out of the reach of ridicule, but a good sound flogging such as he would with rapture inflict upon a book of such principles would be of service to the indiscriminate readers of poetry, and perhaps to the noble author himself, who seems at 23 to have collected most of the vices of 50. It is just one of the instances in which it might be useful to unmuzzle the rabidness of Gifford.[2] With all this the poetry will delight you. The parts in which he uses antiquated and obsolete language are by far the least good, and it is difficult to say from what perversion of taste

A sound flogging urged

known signal, stalked into the room bearing in both hands this brilliant heirloom, equally remarkable for its huge size and its antique appearance, which however admitted of no equivocation respecting its use. He had fairly marched to the top of the room and placed his burden on its usual throne, before he perceived his blunder. His exclamation of ' God forgive me,' his hasty retreat, shrouding with a napkin the late object of his solemn entry, and the confusion of the good company, may be more easily conceived than described."

[1] Published March 1st, 1812, the edition being sold in three days. Byron wrote in his Diary: " I awoke one morning and found myself famous."

[2] Here the " Quarterly " Reviewers are incited to do what had aroused hatred against the " Edinburgh's " Quarterly chastisers. But Gifford had read the work in MS., and praised it.

he used it at all, as he lays the tour in present times. He is now a desperate retainer of the Talents and sworn friend of Holland House which he abused heretofore, as he did you and everybody he could in his *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*. The following lines of his on Princess Charlotte are pretty; you know she cried when her papa scolded Lord Lauderdale.

Weep, daughter of a royal Line
Thy Sire's disgrace, thy land's decay,
And oh! that ev'ry tear of thine
Could wash a father's fault away.

Weep, for thy tears are virtuous tears,
They fall to bless a suff'ring isle,
And be each drop in future years
Repaid thee—by a nation's smile.[1]

Perhaps you have seen this effusion, if so forgive me. I began to write because I had a story to tell which I would not lose. I have gone on prosing as I should have done if you had been here. As my paper is finished I will now release you with the assurance of our united regards to Mrs. Scott and yourself, and our wishes for your speedy progress with your poem and cottage, which rises I suppose like Vanbrugh's house to the sound of the Lyre.[2]—Ever dear Sir, yours truly and affectionately,

J. B. Morritt.

From Lady Alvanley

26, Dover Street,
Sat. April 25 [1812].

I do not know whether I ought not to make many apologies to you, my dear Sir, for intruding upon your time, always more profitably employ'd than in reading mere chit-chit letters from a female correspondent, but having the opportunity of conveying a few lines through the medium of Miss Smith who leaves London on Monday next, I could not resist the temptation she offer'd me of bringing myself to your recollection, and of expressing my regret at the small chance we have, I fear, of seeing you in our great city this Spring—tho', if it be true, as report states, that your fertile Genius is again about to amuse the world, you have certainly taken the surest way of consoling your friends for your absence. . .

I have been much amused at reading *your friend* Lord Byron's

[1] The poem first appeared in the "Morning Post," and then in the 2nd edn. of *The Corsair*. It refers to a scene when the Princess burst into tears during a dispute between her father and his Ministers.

[2] Scott was now building Abbotsford. "As for the house, and the poem [*i.e.*, *Rokeby*], there are twelve masons hammering at the one, and one poor noddle at the other, so they are both in progress," he answered.

new work, and should like to hear your opinion of it. The Poetry seems to me very beautiful, but if an offer were made *to me* of becoming a Homer, a Virgil, or a Milton upon the conditions of adopting such principles and such feelings as this poor young man appears to be cursed with, I would decline without a moment's hesitation. The idea of walking about the World without caring for, or being loved by, one human being, must be the height of mortal wretchedness; and as he who professes to do so is but four and twenty years old, we must expect to hear that a Pistol is resorted to, as a resource against the protraction of so much unsocial misery.

Attacks on Lord Elgin

I heard the other day that Lord Byron had sent a copy of that part of the Poem relating to Lord Elgin's Athenian depredations, before its publication,[1] to his Lordship, telling him at the same time "that he thought it but fair to let him be the first to read what had been written upon the subject"—an instance of *polite* attention to the feelings of the man one abuses not often heard of, I fear, amongst Authors, and certainly not put in practice by Lord Byron before this time. Politics have lately brought him and Lord Holland to become very intimate, and the only "amende honorable" he would make both to Lord and Lady H. for what he had formerly written about them was to stop the publication of a new Edition of the *Bard and Reviewers*, particularly for sale, and to put the copies into the fire—a very well meant but very foolish compliment, as the book is already in possession of three-fourths of the London readers, and those who have it not, will be sure to borrow it, as soon as they hear why it is not to be published. . .[2]—Your sincerely obliged friend and servant,

A. D. Alvanley.

From Samuel Rogers

London,
July, 1816.

My Dear Scott,—Many, many thanks for your introduction to Robert Burns, and to the Magician who has raised him to life again. To speak seriously, the Portrait is admirable, tho' I confess it would have affected my mind still more if he had sat for it. The Artist, too, struck me exceedingly. Such simplicity of

[1] Byron attacked Lord Elgin on account of the Elgin Marbles in both *Childe Harold* and *The Curse of Minerva*.

[2] He attacked Lord and Lady Holland in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* in the belief that they were responsible for the article in the "Edin. Rev." (Jan. 1808) upon *Hours of Idleness*, which—says Sir M. E. Grant Duff in his *Diary*—Lord Brougham, after denying it for thirty years, confessed that he had written. Following the reconciliation with the Hollands, the copies of *English Bards* not issued were destroyed.

manners I never saw: and he has great genius! That sketch of the sick man in his *bonnet de nuit*, and its companion, the old Lady, are above all praise.[1]

Justice to Lady Byron

The event you allude to was to me quite unexpected. In the summer and autumn I observed no alteration, tho', I believe, they were then unhappy. After the separation I saw him every day, and he was on all occasions anxious to do her justice.[2] "Wherever the wrong lies, he used to say, it does not lie with her: she is perfect in thought, word, and deed"; and whenever a syllable dropped from another that seemed to reflect upon her, he instantly checked it. It is, as you say, a sad calamity, and another triumph for mediocrity over genius. He is just now on the lake of Geneva. Venice is a City he has long wished to see; and, after a rapid journey thro' Italy, he talks of paying another visit to his old friend in Albania.[3] But on this and a thousand other subjects, my dear Scott, I think I could pour out my mind to you, were you and I together by the same fire-side; and I am very sorry we meet so seldom. Coleridge is now at Highgate, and in better health than usual. He is printing some letters to his friend Wordsworth on his theory of Poetry, a theory certainly very assailable; and also a Play written last year for the Drury Lane Stage.[4] Poor Sheridan! I sat very often by his bed-side. Just before he took finally to his bed, and a day or two before Lord Byron left England, I prepared a little supper for us, and looked with pleasure to the meeting; but, alas, I went alone, and carried an excuse from Lord Byron. Sharp is now at the foot of the Alps; which, whenever I saw them, struck me always as if I was looking at them for the first time. In a fortnight I shall set off for the North; whether I shall get so far as the Tweed, I dare not say. But, if I do, I shall not forget to enquire for you. Pray remember me very particularly to Mrs. Scott, and to Miss Scott. I should be happy to walk with her in *another Abbey*. *There*, perhaps, she would indulge me with a song of other times. Farewell and believe me, to be ever your affectionate Friend,

SAML. ROGERS.

[1] Apparently refers to an etching or sketch of Burns, perhaps by C. K. Sharpe.

[2] *i.e.*, the separation from Lady Byron (signed Jan. 15, 1816), on account, says Sir John Charles Fox (in *The Byron Mystery*), of cruelty towards Lady Byron by conduct towards his half-sister, apart from the grave charge affecting her.

[3] Probably refers to Ali Pacha, the "Mahometan Buonaparte," with whom Ld. B. became friendly in 1809. The two did not meet during Byron's exile.

[4] Coleridge in 1817 published his *Biographia Literaria*, part of Chapters I–VII (Vol. II), whereof is concerned with his theories of poetry, with special reference to Wordsworth. In the same year he published his *Zapolya: A Christmas Tale* (rejected by Kean), which is apparently the play referred to.

[P.S.] I am glad to hear you are so busy, but hope your talents as a Builder are not confined to stone and mortar. I am just returned from Sheridan's funeral. Such a catalogue of Mourners! And yet he was suffered to die in the hands of the Sheriff. In a letter written to me from his bed—the last I believe that he ever wrote—I can just decipher these words: "I am absolutely undone and broken hearted. They are going to put the Carpets out of the Window, and break into Mrs. S.'s Room—*and take me.*" [1]

From Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe Thursday, [March 1817].

My Dear Scott,—I send you an impression of my scrawl of Bothwell Bridge, which is merely meant to show the disposition of the troops. Pray have the goodness to allow me a peep at the Marchioness of Newcastle's Plays.

I have just finished *Manfred*,[2] and written a doggerel Prologue for him.—

1

Most gentle Readers, 'twill appear
Our Author fills this scene
With what betided Major Weir
And his frail sister Jean.

2

He freely here his fault avows
In bringing not before us,
The Major's Cat, and Mares, and Cows
Assembled in a Chorus.

3.

But by and bye he'll mend his Play,
And then the World shall see
That Incest only paves the way
For Bestiality.

Adieu ever most truly yours,

[unsigned] *

From J. B. S. Morritt PORTLAND PLACE, Sunday 8th [Jan. 1818].

My Dear Scott,—I had yesterday nothing to say, and I believe I am much in the same situation, but your letter has amused me so much and given my thoughts an easy canter over the ground so

[1] It was strenuously denied afterwards that Sheridan died "a neglected pauper" (see Lockhart's letter and footnote, pages 146 & 147.)

[2] Byron's *Manfred* had been published this year. Sharpe's dislike of Byron and Shelley because of the morals of their poetry is curious. In a memorandum of a conversation with Scott, Jan. 1819, Sharpe advances the belief that Byron took the plot of *Manfred* from the story of Major Weir and his sister; and he is now quoted as an authority for the theory. Thomas Weir, a reputed sorcerer, confessed to incest, sorcery, and other crimes; and was burned at the stake, near Edinburgh, with his sister, in 1670.

various and so full of objects that I cannot help thinking I have. So have at you. I have not read *Frankenstein* yet, but as you recommend it I will.[1] Like you, too, I have heard a good deal of the author. When at Oxford he wrote a book, as I am told, only to establish the trifling proposition that there is no God, which he dedicated to one of the Bishops on the same principle, I suppose, that George Fox the Quaker tried to make the Pope a Protestant. This exploit procured Mr. Shelley the honour of expulsion from the University. He was afterwards a member of the H. of Commons, where he sustained with some success the reputation of being the greatest fool in the House, though his claim may be disputed : yet he made some applications to the Treasury, he being in Opposition, which went far to establish his title. He went abroad with both his conquests, the wedded and unwedded *philosophers* ; and as Lord Byron was in want of such a convenience, the unwedded lady was made over to him, and the whole party have been living together for some time. The acknowledged children produced by this Quadruple Alliance are *Frankenstein* and a canto of *Childe Harold* now in the Press ; besides which there is a certain *Beppo*, without any other name and which puzzles people as to its drift. In this poor Sotheby is belaboured unmercifully,[2] so are mathematical Ladies, including, I suppose, Lady Byron ; also the Blues ; *idem*, the society of London, and in general the climate and kingdom of England. Sotheby who, as we all know, is pompous and pragmatical enough, incurred the noble Bard's displeasure by criticising his works, and giving him a serious letter of advice about his wife &c., which he, poor man, was either blockhead enough, or vain enough, to suppose himself entitled to do and his friend inclined to receive. I think he will not do so any more. The Bard complains of English women that they are chilly—which, considering the temperature of those with whom he has most intercourse, is rather unreasonable. I suspect there is too much mercury in his Lordship's Thermometer.

Byron's complaint

The Athols have been suffering calamity, and you will have seen in the papers that their youngest son Lord C.[3] has been again

[1] It was not by Shelley (as Scott also believed), but by his second wife, Mary ; and he was not a M.P. This letter is a mixture of truth and error.

[2] John Murray, writing to Scott about this time, says the attack was also in consequence of Sotheby having cut Byron's acquaintance abroad.

[3] *i.e.*, Lord Charles Murray, son of the 4th Duke of Atholl. The Press said " he had been observed to be dejected, and expressed his determination to go as a Missionary. The step having been opposed, he secretly left his father's house. After a search, he was discovered at the Albany Tavern, Rotherhithe." Hence Morritt's topical sarcasm.

running away, and though brought back is, I fear, in a state of mental derangement. He wishes, it seems, to go as Missionary to distant countries, and his brains are addled by the Methodists. When will craziness be secularised again ? At present, the moment a man is mad he becomes a Methodist ; and, in general, as soon as he becomes a Methodist he is mad. Your Cameronian is only mad N. NW, and will be a most desirable acquisition to Abbotsford. I propose myself the benefit of hearing his doctrines, and of dancing to the Pipes during my next skip over the border. . . .[1]—Believe me ever truly and cordially yours,

J. B. S. MORRITT.

From Lord Byron [2]

PISA,
January 12, 1822.

MY DEAR SIR WALTER,—I need not say how grateful I am for your letter, but I must own my ingratitude in not having written to you again long ago. Since I left England (and it is not for all the usual term of transportation) I have scribbled to five hundred blockheads on business, etc., without difficulty, though with no great pleasure ; and yet, with the notion of addressing you a hundred times in my head, and always in my heart, I have not done what I ought to have done. I can only account for it on the same principle of tremulous anxiety with which one sometimes makes love to a beautiful woman of our own degree, with whom one is enamoured in good earnest ; whereas, we attack a fresh-coloured housemaid without (I speak, of course, of earlier times) any sentimental remorse or mitigation of our virtuous purpose.

Love in earnest and —

I owe to you far more than the usual obligation for the courtesies of literature and common friendship—for you went out of your way in 1817 to do me a service, when it required not merely kindness, but courage to do so : to have been recorded by you in such a manner would have been a proud memorial at any time ; but at such a time, when " all the world and his wife," (or rather *mine*) as the proverb goes, were trying to trample upon me, was some-

[1] A preacher of the Cameronian Sect who proposed living on Scott's estate. He was remarkable for his venerable aspect and violent prejudices.

[2] This is one of the comparatively few documents from Scott's Letter-Books of which a version has already been printed. My transcription from the original letter, however, shows some interesting variations from the text given by Prothero and Coleridge in the standard *Works of Lord Byron* (13 vols.). For example, above, in the last line but one, the bracketed words '(or rather *mine*),' Byron's mention of his wife, are omitted by the previous editors, thus losing the chief point of the poet's bitter reference which belies the attitude to Lady Byron which he assumed to Rogers (see page 185).

thing still higher to my self-esteem. I allude to the "Quarterly Review" of the 3rd C[ant]o of C[hild]e H[arol]d which Murray told me was written by you,—and, indeed, I should have known it without his information, as there could not be *two* who *could* and *would* have done this at the time. Had it been a common criticism however eloquent or panegyrical—I should have felt pleased, undoubtedly, and grateful, but not to the extent which the extraordinary good-heartedness of the whole proceeding must induce in any mind capable of such sensations. The very tardiness of this acknowledgement will, at least, show that I have not forgotten the obligation; and I can assure you that my sense of it has been out at compound interest during the delay. I shall only add one word upon the subject—which is, that I think that you, and Jeffrey, and Leigh Hunt, were the only literary men, of numbers whom I know (and some of whom I had served), who dared venture even an anonymous word in my favour just then: and that, of those three, I had never seen one at all—of the second, much less than I desired—and that the third was under no kind of obligation to me, whatever; while the other *two* [1] had been actually attacked by me on a former occasion—*one*, indeed, with some provocation, but the other wantonly enough. So you see you have been heaping "coals of fire etc." in the true gospel manner: and I can assure you that they have burnt down to my very heart.

I am glad that you accepted the Inscription.[2] I meant to have inscribed *The Foscari's* to you instead; but firstly, I heard that *Cain* was thought the least bad of the two as a composition; and 2dly, I have abused Southey like a pickpocket in a note to *The Foscari's*, and I recollected that he is a friend of yours (though not of mine) and that it would not be the handsome thing to dedicate to one friend anything containing such matters about another. However, I'll work the Laureate before I have done with him, as soon as I can master Billingsgate therefor. I like a row, and always did from a boy, in the course of which propensity, I must needs say that I have found it the most easy of all to be gratified—personally and poetically. You disclaim "jealousies." But I would ask, as Boswell did of Johnson, "of *whom could* you be *jealous*?"—of none of the living certainly, and (taking all and all into consideration) of which of the dead?

His abuse of Southey

[1] *i.e.*, Scott and Jeffrey, whom Byron attacked in his early *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*.

[2] *i.e.*, the Dedication of *Cain*, accepted by Scott in a letter to Murray of December 4, 1821.

I don't like to bore you about the Scotch novels (as they call them, though two of them are wholly English, and the rest half so), but nothing can or could ever persuade me since I was the first ten minutes in your company that you are *not* the man. To me those novels have so much of "Auld Lang Syne" (I was bred a canny Scot till ten years old), that I never move without them; and when I removed from Ravenna to Pisa the other day and sent on my library before, they were the only books that I kept by me, although I already have them by heart.

January 27th 1822.

I delayed till now concluding in the hope that I should have got *The Pirate*, who is under way for me, but has not yet hove in sight. I hear that your daughter is married, and I suppose by this time you are half a grandfather—a young one, by the way. I have heard great things of Mrs. Lockhart's personal and mental charms, and much good of her Lord. That you may live to see as many novel Scotts as there are Scot's novels, is the very bad pun, but sincere wish of,—Yours Ever most affectionately,

BYRON.*

P.S.—Why don't you take a turn in Italy? You would find yourself as well-known and as welcome as in the Highlands among the natives. As for the English, you would be with them as in London; and I need not add, that *I* would be delighted to see you again—which is far more than I shall ever feel or say for England, or (with a few exceptions "of kith, kin, and allies") any thing that it contains. But my "heart warms to the Tartan," or to anything of Scotland which reminds me of Aberdeen and other parts not so far from the Highlands or that town (about Invercauld and Braemar) where I was sent to drink goat's *fey* in 1795–6 on a threatened decline after the scarlet fever. But I am gossiping, so good night, and the Gods be with your dreams!

Love for Scotland

Pray, present my respects to Lady Scott, who may perhaps recollect having seen me in town in 1815.

I see that one of your supporters (for like Sir Hildebrand,[1] I am fond of Guillim) is a *Mermaid*. It is my crest too, and with precisely the same curl of tail. There's concatenation for you! I am building a little cutter at Genoa, to go a' cruising in the Summer. I know you like the sea too.

[1] In *Rob Roy*.

From Lady Anne Barnard

BERKELEY SQUARE,
August 27, 1824.

My Dear Sir Walter,—I felt very much obliged to a friend in the country for sending me the finest Haunch of Venison I ever saw, this morning, as it gave me some little excuse for writing to you, of whom I have thought of often lately—very often, altho' I have not teazed you with pen and ink. . . The only way of making the article Venison really useful to a Friend is giving an Order for it on the great Venison Dealer Mr. Othon No. 45, Old Bond Street, who takes care to have it killed and sent off fresh to any distance : this is the method I have proceeded by yours. I had lodged one before for you, but I said wait till I had more, so you have now a right on Mr. Othon for 2 *Haunches*, one, or two at a time, to be packed up and sent off to whom you please, when you please, delivered in London or sent to Edinburgh or elsewhere by steam-boat.

What a glorious thing this same Steamboat is. There is no use now for the Poets making the unreasonable request, " Ye Gods Annihilate but Time and Space to make two Lovers happy." The Steamboat does it by water, and I see MacAdams smoothing all by Land. I wish the Steamboat would tempt you some day to step into it, though this is not the time of year to make a visit here, when every one is Flying off to visit *you*.

I had a visit yesterday—it did not tell me all that I would have wished to learn, and yet I was glad to see the person—from the servant of Lord Byron, Mr. Fletcher.[1] He seems a simple-hearted illiterate man, attached to his master, grieving over his unlucky fate, unwilling to pass by one hair's breadth the boundaries of *Truth*, wishing to be possessed of more solid grounds than he has to comfort us all about the poor departed poet, with a fund of hope and expectation from the frame he saw him in that the time was approaching when he wou'd be a changed man. His mind had become less vindictive [and] more tender ; he talked oftener and with more fondness of his child ; with more affection of his sister ; with more *consideration* of *Lady Byron*, our friend—for I believe she is your friend as well as mine. An impression was given me of what Mr. Fletcher did not say but what his general conversation awaken'd in me : that in consequence of his [Byron's] transactions with the Greeks, the *good* he was doing *them*, the unbounded

Fletcher talks of his master

[1] Byron praised his man's faithfulness, but described him as incompetent and stupid. Lady Anne Barnard's letter does not belie the character.

gratitude and *fondness* they felt for him, the possibility he flattered himself with that his Muse might have to communicate one of the finest stories that the pen of poet ever had to sing on classick ground, that his fire, his genius, and his natural generosity, falling in with his Foible [and] love of Notoriety might have been the means of smoothing down his bad feelings and awakening better by giving him what he had had but little of in his lifetime—some love and approbation, and *Self-approbation* too. I saw that Mr. Fletcher believed that he might be a totally different person in the hands of one person and of another, and that with a thousand good qualities a less superior woman might have suited him better than Lady B.[1] But I cannot forget his forward, cruel nature at the commencement of his married life, which she told me [of] or her temperate and respectable conduct. Oh, it was very sweet; but Mr. F. (*entre nous*) seemed to think there was Truth in his belief of the ascendency an Inferior Agent had over her mind.

Love of Notoriety

I wish he had lived. All might have come well perhaps. I am glad none of his own school were with him. The departing spirit locked inward was the more likely to converse with its Maker. I wish he had even lived a day longer before the deliriums came on; if he had any hopes or pious reflections the testimony of his servant would have been the more believed for his simplicity and want of education. . . I will only add that Lord B's admiration of one called "the Author of *Waverley*," and his delight in his works was so great that whatever Ship came into port, it was the first question he sent to the beach to know—if any work of that author was on board; and if there was, never did he quit it till it was devoured.[2]—Gratefully and affectionately yours,

ANNE BARNARD.

From M. Phillips

26 ST. JAMES STREET, BUCKINGHAM GATE,
June 25, 1824.

SIR,—I had great pleasure in reading in some of the public papers a beautiful, feeling, and just éloge on the late Lord Byron, which induces me to take the liberty of sending you the following anecdote. When Lord Byron was of the committee of Drury Lane Theater

[1] Scott, in his reply thanking Lady Anne for this letter, wrote: "Respecting his [Byron's] most unhappy and deplorable quarrel with his lady, I lay much blame on the agents he had about him; and indeed it was his general misfortune to chuse rather bad counsellors."

[2] "*Waverley* is the best and most interesting novel I have redde since—I don't know when," wrote Byron to Murray shortly after its publication.

the author of the tragedy *Bertram* suggested to his Lordship his (the author's) inability of visiting London, with his tragedy by reason of pecuniary pressure, his house being infested with executions and bailiffs. Lord Byron immediately transmitted the author one hundred guineas, which act of generosity accounts for the performance of so vile a production.[1]—Your obedient servant,

M. Phillips.

From John Wilson Croker ADM[IRALT]Y
16th Jan., 1830.

My Dear Scott,—I wrote a month ago to *Sir James Boswell, Bart., Auchlinleck, Mauchline,* N.B. asking, very civilly I hope, after his grandfather's papers; and I stated my acquaintance with his father and his uncle. I have had no answer. Now, *pray*, find out from somebody in Ayrshire whether the young Baronet is at home, or where he may be. I need not add that if you could, thro' any channell, get at him or his Mamma, and find whether the Journals are at Auchlinleck you would confer a great favour on me and on the literary world.[2]

I suppose you have read Moore's [*Life* of] Byron. He has done, as poor Lawrence tried to do—brought out the beauties, softened the defects, and made at once a good portrait and a fine picture. But what a monster B. really was; *teste* (amongst many), one passage about his Mother.[3] I wonder Moore (suppressing so much) did not suppress *that*. I have told Murray that Moore has polished the *ebony* till it almost looks like *ivory*.—Yours ever affectionately,

J. W. Croker.

From Charles Kirkpatrick Sharp Sunday Night [Mar. 1830].

Dear Sir Walter,—I return, with many thanks, the book your kind daughter was so good as to lend to me. I thought myself tired of it, but now I am sorry that it is finished—full of repetition and ill nature too.[4] Little Thomas is the Irish toad (they are quite

[1] Opinion was sharply divided as to the merits of the Rev. C. R. Maturin's play. Byron was himself in financial straits at this time, although giving away the considerable profits of his literary work which he refused to touch on principle.

[2] These were held like State secrets because the son, Sir Alexander, thought his father lowered himself by his association with Johnson. The Papers have now been published.

[3] Refers to a talk between Byron and Lord Sligo, while bathing. The poet, pointing to his naked leg and club foot, said: "Look there! it is to her false delicacy at my birth I owe that deformity; and yet . . . she has never ceased to taunt and reproach me with it."

[4] *i.e.*, Thomas Moore's *Life* of Byron.

common in his country on *two* legs) after all. I thought, from what I heard and saw of him, that he was very good natured; but one is ever finding out one's errors in this delusive world. However, let those he hath affronted read his *Loves of the Angels*, and then they will have their revenges. He is a curious specimen of many things. I remember, long ago, when I heard him sing in London, I never could help thinking of my dear old nurse Jenny's ditty :—

Little Tommy Titmouse
Sat upon a pole—
Wiggle waggle went his head
And—

modesty forbids the rest.

There are many lies in this book, and I had much ado to prevent myself from spoiling your margin by [the] contradicting process now and then. But one thing very much surprises me; that Lord B. could never read *Clarissa* where he might have found a hero after his own heart, infinitely better drawn than all his rogues put together; the most pleasing rascal possible and in prose too—which is much more unwieldly than verse on such occasions. But perhaps he told a lie about this, as he did about many other things. Now he and his Pistol are dead, those who knew him dare speak the truth. If I had not before known the vast reputation of Burns, I should have wondered at Lord Byron's. But the one was a plough boy, and the other a Lord—which accounts for everything. Yet I think if my Lord Rochester had lived a little longer he would have been a greater genius than the last, for he had a vast deal of esprit, and no tricks of trade such as constant alliteration, which is the charm of some, but the shock to me in Lord B.'s poetry. There is no simplicity in his songs (nor in Thomas's neither): the charm of charms—all conceit—and " the cruel Cupid kills me." But I fear I am talking treason, for I remember you once thrust me under the grate for blaspheming *Don Juan*. *Dixi*—no, but now I think on't, I have not done yet. Your description of the trial in *Marmion* and Crabbe's sick sailor, are, I am confident in my own mighty wisdom, ten thousand times better than all Lord B.'s verses put together. You see, kind Sir, how positive one grows in one's old age by sitting at the fire alone, and swilling hogsheads of Porter.

Sharpe under the grate

One thing in the book shows the poet or rather Peer: his gratitude to Lady Keith for being civil to him at Lady Jersey's; and yet he abused her worse than a cinder wench in *Don Juan*, for which her husband, who can fight, might have said something to

him, had he ever come back from Greece. Another wonder, and I have done: that he ever thought *The Duenna* better than *The Beggar's Opera*! where again there is a hero that should have been dear to his heart—and nothing in the two pieces bears any comparison.[1] You will wish me at the devil for all this stuff.

I do not wait upon you because I know you are busy, and I have got nothing particular to say. Adieu, my patron and the best friend I ever had on earth. Reading a book like this makes me prouder than ever of your long undeserved kindness.

[Unsigned.]

Nathan T. Rosseter

WILLIAMSTOWN,
March 25th, 1831.

SIR,—You will undoubtedly be much surprised at receiving a letter from one who is a perfect stranger to yourself, except through the medium of your much and justly admired writings. Sir, the principal object of my troubling you at this time is this. Some years since, while Lord Byron (I believe a strong friend of yours) was in Italy, he unluckily lost a small valise containing, together with several letters to himself from distinguished people in England, a number of fugitive poems. Among them, I should think, the conclusion of his celebrated piece *The Giaour*. All unpublished, these fell into the hands of a friend of mine who, dying a few months since, bequeathed to me these papers. Now sir, my object in writing is, if you are willing to request your acceptance of these very valuable manuscripts, which will be forwarded as soon as your wishes are known on the subject. I can receive an answer from you in a few months, although a native of another hemisphere.[2] —Sir, I remain yours respectfully,

NATHAN T. ROSSETER, New York City, N.Y.

[1] *The Duenna*, a musical medley sometimes called an opera, by R. B. Sheridan, founded on Wycherley's play *The Country Wife* (1673). First produced in 1775; and revived at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, in 1924.

[2] Here is a mystery. Says Scott in his Journal (May 2), "I don't see I can at all be entitled to these, so shall write and decline them." Two days later he notes that he will consult Lockhart about them. Shortly after, he was ill, and there is no further reference to the MSS. The letters were hardly likely to be copies; and it was rather too early for forgeries of the poems. Lt.-Col. John Murray tells me that, to the best of his knowledge, no part of the *Giaour* MS. (which is in his possession) has ever been in America.

LADY ANNE BARNARD AND HER "AULD ROBIN GRAY"

LADY ANNE BARNARD AND HER "AULD ROBIN GRAY"

THIS is the kind of thing the dictionaries say about them:

> "Barnard, Lady Anne (Lindsay) (1750–1825). Poet, *e. dau.* of the 5th Earl of Balcarres, married Andrew Barnard, afterwards Colonial Secretary at Cape Town. On the *d.* of her husband in 1807 she settled in London. Her exquisite ballad of 'Auld Robin Gray' was written in 1771, and *pub.* anonymously. She confessed the authorship to Sir Walter Scott in 1823."

That is the story in its brevity. I quote it to show what a big niche in Literature can be secured by a little poem—the other half-dozen or so pieces by Lady Anne being entirely negligible. Truly we can say with Balzac that Fortune is feminine, when we reflect upon the mountainous tomes of erudition and the piling epics that have not secured even a mention in the records. But there is more in it than that. When Lady Anne Lindsay (as she was in the early stage of womanhood that often makes strange revelations of emotion) set about writing a new Scottish ballad to the tune of an old one that had "naughty words," she produced a song she could never have guessed would be celebrated for generations. Incidentally, the analogy between the story of "Auld Robin Gray" and that of the equally famous "Flowers of the Forest" is curious.

"Auld Robin Gray" touched the very kernel of Scottish sentiment, which is sweeter and tenderer where the shell is harder. It became known through the folk-song's only test of popularity—oral tradition. Long before its authorship was known, and when—as we shall see—the pundits debated whether it was ancient or modern, there were few who could not continue the tale of those opening lines:

> When the sheep are in the fauld, when the cows come hame,
> When a' the weary world to quiet rest are gane,
> The woes of my heart fa' in showers frae my ee,
> Unken'd by my gudeman, who soundly sleeps by me.[1]

It is good fishing, even among the Abbotsford Letter-Books, which

[1] There are variants more Scottish than this; but it is appropriate here to quote the original as printed for Sir Walter.

allows an editor to include these naïve letters of Lady Anne, in which she tells, with many delightful asides, the story of the authorship of the ballad. Although the authorship became a mystery to excite the Society of Antiquaries, and to incite the newspapers of the time to offer a reward for the solution, Scott had held the key for some years before she "confessed." He unlocked the secret, apparently without reference to the authoress, in *The Pirate* (published in 1821), the 26th chapter of which is headed with a stanza from the "Continuation of 'Auld Robin Gray,'" the text beginning: "The condition of Minna much resembled that of the village heroine in Lady Ann[e] Lindsay's beautiful ballad." The sequel was this correspondence and Scott's suggestion that he should publish "Auld Robin Gray" in a privately printed edition of 31 copies as his contribution to the publications of the Bannatyne Club which he had lately founded. She then appears to have sent to him numerous other poems by herself and members of her family, which he printed in a thick 4to volume titled *Lays of the Lindsays*. But the fair ballad-writers changed their minds; and one of the reasons appears in Lady Anne's letter of Feb. 20, a trembling concern lest they should be reviewed. The appeal to Sir Walter to spare their blushes reveals a shyness strangely remote from these days, when the new peerage runs half the Press, and would seem to be less subject to blushing than to colouring a paragraph. In the end the *Lays* were suppressed, and "Auld Robin Gray" appeared alone for the exclusive pleasure of the Bannatyne Club, Scott contributing a Preface in which he quoted a part—and censored at that—of Lady Anne's first letter. It is typical of her that when she died she was found to have bequeathed £50 to Sir Walter, probably as compensation for the expense he had incurred in printing the *Lays*.

This account of Lady Anne Barnard, her ballad, and her engaging letters, calls for a more detailed portrait. It is supplied by that not less interesting character, Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, "Her face was pretty and replete with vivacity; her figure light and elegant; her conversation lively, and, like that of the rest of her family, peculiarly agreeable. Though she had wit, she never said ill-natured things to show it. She gave herself no airs, either as a woman of rank, or as the authoress of 'Auld Robin Gray.'" Our letters are enough to authenticate this portrait. But if ever a woman's story remained veiled—and how many there are?—one feels that it was Lady Anne's. Her friendships, for one thing, suggest that. One of them was with the Prince Regent; another

is described by Mr. J. A. Lovat Fraser in his book *Henry Dundas, Viscount Melville.*[1] She was not married until she was forty-three ; and she was fifteen years older than her husband, who died fourteen years later. She had been, says Mr. Fraser, on friendly terms with her Dundas ; and, in the interval between his divorce from his first wife and his marriage with the second, he had been a welcome and frequent visitor in Berkeley Square, where Lady Anne lived with her widowed sister, Lady Margaret Fordyce. " There is little doubt," adds Mr. Fraser, " that Lady Anne was attached to Dundas, and hoped that he would ask her to become his wife. It was not until Dundas dashed her hopes by his second marriage that she consented to accept one of the numerous offers of marriage that she had received." Under the date Oct. 1812, Kirkpatrick Sharpe writes to his particular friend the Margravine of Anspach : " We Scotch people have all felt a huge sensation on the nuptials of Lady Margaret Fordyce, which certainly were surprising enough. I suppose Lady Anne Barnard will go off next ; and, indeed, I wonder that her sister's spouse did not give her the preference, were it only for being the authoress of the ballad of ' Auld Robin Gray,' a merit (and it is a very great one) which she certainly possesses." These are only glimpses—one admits it with regret—of the lively Lady Anne, who shall now speak for herself.

From Lady Anne Barnard BERK[E]LEY SQUARE, LONDON,
July 1823.

My Dear Sir,—I am really ashamed to tell you how long I have remained balancing between the strong desire I had of addressing you and the Timidity I felt in encroaching upon Time so valuable to the world at large, but I am convinced your Good Nature will not only pardon me but will lead you to grant the favour I am about to ask. It is, that you will express to the Author of *Waverley*, with whom I am informed you are personally Acquainted, how gratefully I feel the kindness with which he has (in the 2d vol. of the *Pirate*, 13th Chapter) so distinguishedly noticed, and by his powerfull authority assigned, the *Long Contested* Ballad of " Auld Robin Gray " to its real Author.

In truth the position I was placed in about that song had at *last* become Irksome to me. How can I then so fully mark my thankfulness to him who has relieved me from my dilemmas as by

[1] Cambridge University Press (1916).

transmitting to him Fairly and Frankly the Origin—Birth—Life—Death—and Confession, Will and Testament of "Auld Robin Gray," with the assurance that the Author of *Waverley* is the *first* person out of my own family who has ever had an explanation from me on the subject.

Robin Gray, so called from its being the name of the old Herds man at Balcarres, was Born soon after the close of the year 1771. My sister Margaret had married and accompanied her husband to London. I was melancholy, and endeavored to amuse myself by attempting a few poetical trifles. There was an antient Scotch melody of which I was passionately fond ; [1] Sophy Johnston, who lived before *Your* day, used to Sing it to us at Balcarres. *She* did not object to its having *very naughty* words, though *I* did. I long'd to sing Old Sophy's air to different words, and to give to its plaintive tones some little History of virtuous distress in Humble life such as might suit it. While attempting to effect this in my closet, I called to my little sister, now Lady Hardwicke, who was the only person near me : "I have been writing a Ballad, my Dear. I am oppressing my Heroine with many misfortunes. I have already sent her Jamie to sea, and broken her Father's arm, and made her Mother fall sick, and given her Auld Robin Gray for a lover ; but I wish to load her with a fifth sorrow in the four lines, poor thing ! Help me to one." "Steal the cow, sister Anne," said the little Elizabeth. The cow was immediately *lifted* by me, and the Song completed. At our Fireside, amongst our Neighbours, "Auld Robin Gray" was always called for. I was pleased in secret with the approbation it met with, but such was *my Dread* of being suspected of writing *any thing*, perceiving the shyness it created in those who could write *nothing*, that I carefully kept my own Secret.

Origin of the ballad

Happening to sing it one day at Dalkeith House with more feeling perhaps than belong'd to a Common Ballad, *our* friend Lady Frances [Scott] smiled, and fixing her eyes on me said : "*You* wrote this Song yourself." The Blushes that followed confirmed my *guilt*. Perhaps I blush'd the more (being then very young) from the recollection of the coarse and odious words from which I borrowed the tune, and was afraid of the Raillery which might have taken place if it had been discover'd I had ever heard such ! Be that as it may, from one honest man I had an excellent hint. The Laird of Dalziel, after hearing it, broke out into the angry Exclamation of : "O the Villain ! O the Auld Rascal ! *I* Ken wha

[1] The tune was that to "The Bridegroom Grat when the Sun went down."

stealt the poor Lassies *Coo*. It was Auld Robin Gray himsel." I thought it a bright idea, and treasured it up for a future occasion. Meantime little as this matter seems to have been worthy of a dispute, it afterwards became almost a party question between the 16th and 18th centuries. " Robin Gray " was either a very, very, Antient Ballad, composed perhaps by David Rizzio and a great curiosity; or a very, very modern matter, and no curiosity at all. I was persecuted to avow whether I had written it or not—where I had got it. Old Sophy kept my counsel, and I kept my own, in spite of the gratification of seeing a reward of twenty guineas offer'd in the newspapers to the person who should ascertain the point past a doubt, and the still more flattering circumstance of a visit from Mr. Jerningham, Secretary to the Antiquarian Society, who endeavor'd to entrap the Truth from me in a manner I took amiss. Had he asked me the question obligingly, I should have told him the Fact distinctly, but confidentially. The Annoyance, however, of this Important Ambassador from the Antiquaries was amply repaid to me by the noble Exhibition of the Ballet of Auld Robin Gray's courtship as performed by dancing dogs under my windows. It proved its popularity from the Highest to the Lowest, and gave me pleasure while I hugg'd myself on my obscurity.

Such was the history of the first part of it. As to the 2d, it was written many years after in compliment to my Dear Old Mother who often said : " Anny, I wish you would tell me how that unlucky business of Jenny and Jamie ended."

To meet her wishes, as far as I could, the 2d part was written. It is not so pleasing as the first, the early loves, and distresses of youth go more to the heart than the contritions, confession and legacies of old age. *My dread*, however, of being named as an Authoress still remaining, tho' I sung it to my Mother I gave her no copy of it. But her affection for me so impressed it on a Memory which retained scarcely any thing else, and she repeated it so often, with the pride of being the Only person that had the power of doing so, that I think it very probable (by means of my mother's friend and constant companion Mrs. Keith), some of the verses may have reach'd the hand of the Author of *Waverley*, as it was a subject of delight to her to boast of her intimacy with him. I wrote another version of the second part as coming from Jenny's own lips, which some people might like better from its being in the same measure with the first, but that which has been already so highly honored as to

Dread of notoriety

be placed where it is in the *Pirate* shall for ever keep its ground with me, and the other shall remain in the corner of my Portfolio. Let me now once more, My dear Sir, intreat that you will prevail on the Author of *Waverley* to accept in testimony of my most grateful thanks of the only copies of this ballad ever given under the hand of the writer, and *will you* call here, I pray, when you come next to London, sending up your name that you may not be denied. You will then find the door open wide to receive you, and two people will shake hands who are unacquainted with Ennui—the one being Innocently occupied from morning to night, the other, with a splendid genius as his companion wherever he goes !—God Bless you.

ANNE BARNARD.

[P.S.]—I see that I have not mentioned the Laird of Dalziel's advice, who, when we were in *tête-a-tête*, afterwards said: "My Dear, the next time you sing that Sang try to change *ae* line a wee bit, and instead o' saying 'To mak the crown a pound, my Jamie gaed to sea,' say, 'To mak it 20 *merks*,' for a Scottish pund, my dear, is but 20 *pence*, and Jamie was no sic en a gowk as to leave Jenny and gang to Sea to *lessen his gear*. It is *that* line (whisper'd he) that tells me the sang was written by some bonnie lassie that didna ken the nature o' the Scotch money as well as an auld writer in the town of Edinbro' would hae kent it."

The laird's clue

I was delighted with the criticism of Old Dalziel. If it had occurred to the Antiquarian Society it might have saved Mr. Jerningham the trouble of his visit. But though I admit that it would have been wiser to have corrected the error, I have never *changed the pound* note which has always pass'd current in its original state.[1]

[In the Abbotsford Letter-Books the above postscript is followed by lists of poems by the three Ladies Lindsay (*i.e.*, Lady Anne and her sisters) which were forwarded with the following letter for Sir Walter to publish with the Ballad. The lists are in the handwriting of the authoress of "Auld Robin Gray," and are twice endorsed "for the convenience of Sir Walter Scott putting in his pocket." Similarly quaint are some of the titles, such as "Lines on the picture of Miss Cheap being devoured when met by a blue-bottle Fly." Between the first letter from Lady Anne and the following is another—which,

[1] Scott dissented from Dalziel's opinion concerning the amount of the pund, pointing out that Jamie was living in Fifeshire, in which commercial county alone a Scottish peasant would have thought of mending his fortune by going to sea. The poor lover, he argued, might be acquainted with the pound sterling, and enlarge his views even to the acquisition of that sum.

however, is more likely to arouse our envy than useful in enlarging our story. She describes a visit to her cellar to choose some wines to send as a gift to Scott. " I found the *color'd* wax of the corks obliterated by age, and some of them so decay'd that I was obliged to give them new ones ; this was not extraordinary after a residence of 22 years there, and five or six more at the Cape. But it renders me fearful that *Sweet* and *Sweeter* may be mix'd, tho' all are from Constantia." This letter concludes by assuring Sir Walter " of the feelings of grateful kindness which are stationary for you in the mind of Anne Barnard—N.B. I must not say *Heart* as it would make your wife Jealous."

From the same

BERK[E]LEY SQUARE,
November 16, 1823.

MY DEAR SIR WALTER,—I fear you may have been tempted to say " what in the world can have become of Lady Anne and her Sketches," though constant occupation makes us lenient to those who abstain from Interrupting us. The Fact is, I have been a *poor thing* for some time ; my Enemy St. Anthony caught hold of me. I hope *You* do not know anything about him, but if you do, you are aware that he makes those who are under his Influence feel—Low—Humble—and Cowardly. *He* persuaded me out of attempting with my imperfect eyes what I had offer'd in the eagerness of my heart, but what—he said—could not be worthy of your acceptance, or of being placed in a collection so curious and interesting as that which you and your literary friends in Edinr are forming.[1] I desisted, but you shall not be a loser, for instead of my own sketches for " Robin Gray " you shall have something else which I have been preparing, which you will prize more—verses of my two Dear Sisters, Lady Margaret Fordyce (Burgess)[2] and Lady Hardwicke. . . .

Caught by St. Anthony

With respect to my own little matters, your approbation of " Robin " having made me look thro' my old papers to find Jenny's version of the 2d part,[3] as she sung it at her wheel, that you might choose between the two which you liked best, I met in my search with a few other attempts written at the *same time* with " Robin Gray "—songs, incidents, stories, all are Scotch, and 50 years having now passed over their heads, I thought I might almost venture to lay them at your feet as Legends, but I fear'd after having sent my sisters' poems, to load your kindness improperly, or to send what might be less deserving than I wished. One of the matters

[1] *i.e.*, the Bannatyne Club's privately issued publication, edited by Scott, of " Auld Robin Gray."

[2] She married secondly Sir J. B. Burgess, Bart.

[3] There were two versions by Lady Anne of the 2nd part of the Ballad, the one she is now sending being " Jenny at her wheel."

I allude to is entitled " The Princess Emily," it has for its Heroine the old Dutchess of Athole, mother to the present Duke. When very young I was at a one goat-whey quarter named Tomnagrew near Dunkeld where an old woman related to me a deed of charity of the Dutchess's which pleased my young fancy so much that I marked it down as I felt it, but nothing more shall go now, one trifle excepted written in a different stile from " Old Robin." As I think it probable that you may know the *living children* of those whom I then loved, and whose Happiness was somewhat accelerated by the droll coincidence of my verses, I shall put the names in stars, but insert a note to tell *you* who they were.

Remember, Dear Sir Walter, that you are the master over all you have received, to *abridge, correct, accept, reject* as you please, it would be a hard case if you were not. But remember also, my Dear good Friend, that after having vanquished all my scruples, finding me ready (as I now am) to be handed by *You* into a distinguished society, it will be but charity to dress me up a little so that I may not *disgrace myself* in twenty ways. It was not the custom in my youth to educate young women *carefully*. Margaret educated herself at an early period of her life, which you will find traces of in her Poem, but I was always careless, and had more of Fancy than solidity. Perhaps you will say, " O Ho—St. Anthony." If you do I shall call you a coaxer, for what I say is true. With respect to your kind, kind offer of inserting " Robin Gray," with or without the name of its Authoress and with as much or as little of its history as I please, I thank you sincerely for the Alternative and for the trouble you are ready to take for me. But I am decidedly of opinion that you would do well to mention me as the authoress in this respectable Record; and to say *who I am* also, one who has hitherto rather *shunn'd* than *sought* notoriety, till teazed with the " petty larceny proceedings " (as you justly call them) of people who blame A[nne] B[arnard] for *Tacitly* allowing herself to be supposed the writer of what *they themselves wrote*, A. B. thinks it a duty she owes to herself to put her name to the song.[1] If you do not think this is entering too much into the silly business, this or something of the sort, which you will arrange far better and in fewer words than I can, will do well.

Claims to authorship

Sir Coutts Trotter has just been here. How many kind things he said of you! In reply to my questions about your sons, he

[1] The coveted authorship of the song had been claimed by, among others, a clergyman.

tells me your eldest is now a fine gallant young soldier, and that your second is very clever and likely to tread in your own footsteps. I'm glad of it, for when, some twenty years hence, when tired of courting the Muses in person, you'll go a'wooing in your boy.

If I should be obliged to have some of my writing transcribed by a young amanuensis I am sure you will forgive me. I have not much time, my house is so full of young Barnards and Lindsays, though I keep a den of *my own* to which I retire when I please, and where I do hope I shall some day find *you*. Give me a hint of your coming to town when you have a prospect of it, I shall keep the secret if you desire me, as you are a likely man to be overpower'd with civilities.—Sincerely yours,

ANNE BARNARD.

From the same

BERK[E]LEY SQUARE,
Decr. 20, 1823.

Thanks, thanks, to you and to your Friends of the Bannatyne Society for the Bumper you drank to my health ; if the prayers of the righteous are good for all that we have reason to hope they are, I shall spend the next year in good health, and I trust that you all will do the same when I pledge the Bumper—as I shall do on New Year's day. Let me thank you next for your interesting letter, interesting in all ways, which I shall reply to as my grandmother desired me to do on all "particular occasions—Methodically," beginning with the sweet and soothed feelings which your approbation of my Sister's verses have given me. When creeping in between them I shall not be afraid of adding my mite to the *Lays of the House of Lindsay*—an excellent title, by the by, to our Triumvirate offerings : it has certainly an antient traditionary sound. And let me take advantage of it by adding one Lindsay more (though a Yorke too), poor Lord Royston's own verses written at Trohlata, where all travellers are expected to leave some Testymony of their having been there. . .

Bumpers

I have heard James Lindsay speak highly of your Son-in-Law, and I am glad that your daughter sings ballads so well : round a good fire a good song is a very good thing ; but I suspect you would give up the best song for a delighted Scream of your grandchild when you give it a bit of Barley Sugar. That sentence of yours is full of the Grand Papa, and I am glad of it : 'tis the young shoots that give vegetation to our old age. I have three girls—none of mine to be sure, but something so near it that I like them almost as well as

if they were my own ; and I believe they like me better. One of them is vastly pretty. I take good care of myself to live as long as I can for her sake, as she is at the age of 12, and I long to see her turn the corner of Sixteen.

I am not sorry in spite of my love of liberty and of Independence to hear you have a little business which gives you Income, Moderate Labour, and little Responsibility.[1] A proper proportion of each of those ingredients makes a good Plumb-pudding ; and that makes me recollect a good story of my Father-in-Law, the Bishop of Limerick (Doctor Barnard), one of the Wits of the last century, who makes one of the Famous Round Robbin to Johnson, of which I possess the original.[2]

Bishop Barnard's pudding

When a young man at Florence, some John Bulls were bewailing the want of Roast Beef and Plumb-pudding. My Bishop's servant offer'd to get them the first, and the Bishop himself undertook for the second. It was " *Impossible.* Not a cook in town could make one, though any sum had been offer'd for a good one." The dinner was settled, however. The Bishop wrote a prescription in Latin to the next apothecary, stating distinctly the Ingredients, and desired that next Sunday the Bolus might be sent at five o'clock, to such an house, quite Hot.

It came attended by the Apothecary himself, who said that " never having made any thing up of the size or quality," he " really had a curiosity to know where the Bolus was to be applied."

" Sit down on that chair, Sir," said the Bishop (as the Roast Beef came smoking in) ; " open your mouth, Sir ; and do as we do." The Apothecary made a most hearty meal, and said he had never liked any of his own medicines so well before.

I now return to your third page, the couplet you quote, as supposed to be written by me, is not mine :—

" When the sun shines bright " &c.

Nothing of mine has ever transpired to my knowledge but a few verses that are in print and pass for old Scotch songs. I ventured

[1] Refers to Scott's ill-fated partnership with the Ballantynes. It is a mark of his esteem for Lady Anne that he should mention a subject which he kept a secret from most of his friends. Even Lockhart, on the eve of the disaster, little knew the great extent of Scott's commitment.

[2] The " Circumscribers " to this famous Round Robin—who also included Burke, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Warton, and Sheridan—in the most deferential way humbly requested Dr. Johnson to rewrite in English, instead of Latin, his epitaph for Dr. Goldsmith's monument. Johnson received it with good humour ; but would not consent " to disgrace the walls of Westminster Abbey with an English inscription." It was thereupon engraved unaltered.

to call one of them, which was sung by Miss Stephens (the music and words being mine unknown to her) a silly song in my opinion, and was advised never to say so again, as it shew'd my own want of taste for the artless works of former times.

As to your kind offer renewed of taking a few lines out of mine own letters to account for the origin of " Robin Gray," oh! how much better wou'd it not be given in your own excellent manner. You know the Facts now; I do not wish to account for any thing, but my own apparent *Inconsistency* in avowing now what I have denied for 50 years, but when character happens to be attacked, and one is suspected (as at first) of thieving credit from the antients and latterly of tacitly withholding from various private persons who have claimed " Robin Gray " any merit there is in it—from a clergyman, in particular, who constitutes himself the author because he has changed the old tune for a new one of his own composition. " An oak with one green leaf on it " would speak under the imputation.

You, in a kind and Friendly manner, have offer'd me a Respectable mode of placing a record of the Truth, in an Honorable and enlightened Society. I accepted of the offer with the gratitude which was your due, requesting only that my sisters, whose Talents are superior to mine, might be associated with me in the permission. You have granted my request, for which I thank you. I have a few excellent lines, " In Abuse of Entic," [1] by my sister Elizabeth (Lady Hardwicke) when she was a girl of 14 at school. I send them: use them or not as you please; as Scotch women we look up to you as our Patron to take care that we do not expose ourselves, and in whatever way you present the " Lays of the House of Lindsay " to the Bannatyne Club we shall be contented, providing they are introduced by Sir Walter Scott.

I wish I were not so hurried at present, but I am afraid of delaying what I send till you are on the eve of making your arrangements, and then it may be too late without giving much trouble. By the by, you say: " Why are you call'd in old Song ' the Lindsay's Light ' ? " I fancy because we were a set of light-going philosophers, who by contentment and cheerfulness master'd the evils of life, instead of letting them master us. Perfectly men of honor (I have heard my father say), they were never in debt; but a penny in a Lindsay's pocket was a great curiosity. One of our forefathers tried to get some by writing ten volumes on the Philosopher's Stone, but I never heard he was the richer for it. However, the

The Lindsay way

[1] *i.e.*, of John Entick, schoolmaster, and author of the *Spelling Dictionary*.

Lindsays, as you know, contrived to have a good deal to do in the affairs of their own country, and never deserted their Master while he stood by Himself. But here is the bottom of the page staring me in the face. Pardon me for this long letter, I pray, and God Bless you. Sincerely yours,

ANNE BARNARD.

From the same Feb. 20, 1824.

These few lines, Dear Sir Walter, ask but *one line* in reply. Lady Hardwicke, I think by her last letter, has conceived the erroneous Idea, that "The Lays of the Lindsays" are to be "published," and therefore will be "liable to be reviewed!" To tranquillize her I have transcribed the paragraph from your first letter, where you tell me the plan of your Society is only to strike off a copy for each of the members of the Bannatyne club and a few for particular friends. This is not Publishing surely! Lord Royston's *Cassandra* was *printed* by him for 20 friends, but not publish'd, and, of course, never reviewed. I am sure you would not have made any change in your subsequent plan of keeping "The Lays of the Lindsays" in a little book to themselves without telling it to us who are gratified by it being introduced under your wing to our Scottish club, but would tremble at the Idea of its being reviewed by a Wider circle of critics than those of our own country composing *Your society*. Were that to be the case, we would rather give up the pleasure you proposed to us, though we should by no means presume to restrict you, should you survive us—which you will probably do, from doing with the Lays what you please. But spare the blushes of our cheeks *at present*. I tell Lady Hardwicke she has nothing to fear of the sort: tell me the same, and all will be well. God Bless you.

"Spare our blushes"

ANNE BARNARD.

[P.S.] I have no hesitation in saying this as I will not be keeping any one in the shade but ourselves.[1]

From the same June 18th, 1824.

MY DEAR SIR WALTER,—I received your packet last Saturday with Joy—so large a portion of the proof copy!—the dear type!—the pleasing size!—your kind note!—all put me into spirits; but before I had had time to peruse it through, Lady Hardwicke came in and

[1] As already indicated in my introductory lines, these objections of the ladies to any publicity for their Lays in their lifetime grew stronger; and the poems, other than "Auld Robin Gray," were suppressed.

with much anxiety entreated me to let her shew the part of it which was here, and indeed all of it, to Lord Hardwicke, who was that moment arrived from Cambridge. I could not refuse, though it threw a new delay in our way. But what was my surprize and mortification ?—I may add what was the pain I felt also from the position I stood in to your goodness—when I received back with the packet the enclosed.

[This is an admirable letter from Lady Hardwicke strongly urging that " Robin Gray " should stand alone, and that the other pieces by the sisters (including her own) were not worthy of the famous ballad.]

You will easily suppose how much this letter, kindly meant (I am certain) and I dare say—upon the whole—wise, discomposed all my arrangements. With 112 pages of copy before me—anxious to look it over and send it off to you as soon as possible, but living with my Family in the Friendship I do—there was no alternative but to abide by the verdict of those who must be more impartial Judges than I can be on the merit of my attempts, or the expediency of letting any work of mine go now under the press save " Robin Gray," which has been so much contested and denied to me in consequence of my silence as to have become a point connected with my private character, more to me than my fame, which renders me so desirous of having the fact cleared up.

The family verdict

This you have done admirably by your declaring your knowledge of the circumstance in early life by means of your Aunt's intimacy with me, corroborated by the account contained in my letter to you of the motives which influenced my conduct, which you are so good as to insert in the Introduction. But this point being fully put to rights, may it not appear that I am departing from the consistency of my former character by bringing out other poems in my advanced life which have never seen the light ? And is it not better to continue a " Single-Speech Hamilton " than to appear desirous of gaining a little more credit, in which I may chance to fail.

My Sister does not use this Argument, but it strikes myself and fixes my determination to withdraw every thing from the press but " Auld Robin Gray," and what is connected with him. How much or how little of this ought to remain shall depend solely on yourself, my dear Sir Walter, if you will still allow me to creep into the collection you mention'd and which you patronize, I shall gratefully thank you. You may use the first part only of " Robin

Gray " and save his " Honest fame " if you please, or you may (to avoid altering my letter) keep all as it now is ; but pray do not deny me your Introduction, or your name as my Editor, to mark the interest you take in me.

Add to your friendship by desiring your printer to send his Bill to Coutts, directed to Lady Hardwicke or to me, that we may discharge every expence that has attended the transaction, and may I entreat you to prevent any copies from being retain'd of what it has been thought wisest by my friends for me to give up.

For all the trouble I have given you, pardon me, pardon me ; and do not cease to take the same Interest in me, that I shall continue to take in your happiness and prosperity.—Affectionately yours,

ANNE BARNARD.[1]

[1] Scott replied to this letter that it did not become him to struggle a point which had been decided, " where Delicacy and Affection were coadjutors upon the Bench of Judgment " ; and that, with whatever feelings of regret he sacrificed his pretty book [*i.e.*, *The Lays of the Lindsays*], he would withdraw the small edition from the printers, reserving not even a single copy. This was done, " Auld Robin Gray " appearing alone in the Bannatyne edition.

LIFE, LETTERS, AND LIBELS—BY VARIOUS AUTHORS

" Monk " Lewis . .	Criticisms of Scott's early poetry—A private play at Lord Melbourne's—Cooking up a farce for Sheridan.
Joseph Ritson . .	His *Life of King Arthur*—And his orthography.
Professor Wm. Smyth .	On tyrants, literary and vulgar—No poets at Cambridge.
William Hayley . .	His halcyon nest—Anna Seward's malignity.
George Crabbe . .	His correspondence—The way of critics—A request for hymns—His interest in hot-headed brethren.
Jemima Layton . .	Anxious to be led by Scott to fame—An offer.
Sophia E. Shedden .	" Monk " Lewis's character—Terrible stories told by his nurse.
Charles Lamb . .	Acknowledges help for Godwin—His philosophy.
Allan Cunningham .	Why Chantrey raised his price—Lockhart's ballads—Song-collecting.
Thomas Moore . .	At work on his *Life* of Byron—His method —Offers dedication to Scott—Murray's slipperiness.
G. P. R. James . .	A curious parallel—He pleads " not guilty " to literary highway robbery—The Englishman's taste.
William Godwin . .	" The Prodigal " at 75 years of age—His powers undecayed—Disappointments with publishers—Request for help.
Robert Chambers . .	Sends a lady to Abbotsford—His indefatigable labours—A plain hint.
Sir Walter Scott . .	Repudiates a charge of neglect—Literary aspirations—His own experience.

LIFE, LETTERS, AND LIBELS—BY VARIOUS AUTHORS

Bullets, bouquets, and back-stabbing reviews made authorship in Scott's time an exciting business. A writer might be fêted at Holland House one evening, and fainting on the Chalk Farm duelling-ground at dawn. It is a debatable question who went to the extreme—the libellers or the flatterers. Among the latter were William Hayley (whose Ballads were illustrated by Blake) and Anna Seward—the " Swan of Lichfield." These two for a pair—who, however, have here substituted stings for the flowers—were neatly caricatured for their flattery of each other by Dr. Mansell, that witty Bishop of Bristol, in the lines which may stand for other literary glorifiers of the period :

" Prince of poets, England's glory,
Mr. Hayley, that is you."

" Ma'am, you carry all before you,
Lichfield Swan, indeed you do."

" In epic, elegy, or sonnet,
Mr. Hayley, you're divine."

" Madam, take my word ~~for~~ upon it,
You yourself are all the Nine."

An amusing book could be written on this aspect of Life, Letters, and Libels in Scott's day, although it was a stern enough matter then. Only Shakespeare and the other Elizabethans surpass the early nineteenth-century group in vigour and splendour of literary achievement—that group headed by Scott, Byron, Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley, and Coleridge ; and including so many lesser men who contributed what permanent literature cannot afford to lose—small though the contribution sometimes is compared with their output and original success. With more writers at work than in any previous age, and publishers—in the early years of the century—often gambling heavily on manuscripts, it is not surprising that contemporary estimates of the writings of the time should be so often contrary to the judgment of posterity. In all ages contemporary criticism is handicapped to a certain extent by its perspective, and makes curious errors. But there never was

a time like Scott's when literary judgment was so warped by politics, religion, social rank, and personal feuds. This writer was elevated and that detracted, to a degree almost incredible to us in a more cautious age. And as the various estimates conflicted, so were there floods of flattery and abuse. Even men of genius assured of permanent places in literature had at times curious ideas about the work of some of their contemporaries. As for Byron: he could stir up as much trouble on the critical hearth as all three witches on the heath. But for the most part he reserved his abuse for a few selected—and worthy—victims. For the Quarterly Reviewers it was all and sundry. Here we have more of Scott's correspondents speculating on their fate at the hands of these reviewers. For some of them publication was a gamble between going into a slaughter-house or into a second edition. Indeed, one friend wrote to Sir Walter: "My *Life, Diary, and Correspondence of Sir William Dugdale* will be ready for the Critical Knife soon after the pig-killing time of Christmas."

Widely as the gentle art of flattery flourished, there is comparatively little of it in the letters to Scott—although he says here that he had been "struck up and struck down, praised and parodied, and flattered, and back-bitten, for fifteen years." On the contrary, there runs through the correspondence to him a remarkable and surely unparalleled stream of affection for the man and enthusiasm for his work. Lockhart in the *Life* says that Scott was the friend of every great contemporary poet. This was either poetic licence or something of the old prejudice of the "Scorpion," as Lockhart signed himself in the "Chaldee Manuscripts"; for the biographer knew well that Scott had no association at all with Keats and Shelley. The point is curious; but, with these two important exceptions, the claim is true enough; and the veneration that characterised the friendships is eloquent tribute to the quondam young ballad-writer who by some witchcraft of his own turned "Author of *Waverley*."

Of the many letters written to him by his fellow authors from which this selection is made, it is appropriate that the first should be from Matthew Gregory Lewis (1775–1818), who won such easy fame with *The Monk* and other tales of the supernatural and horrible. Scott told Moore that "Monk" Lewis was "the person who first set me upon trying my talents at poetry"; and that he had the finest ear for rhythm Scott had ever known. Our letter is an example of the kind of poetry-by-post instruction which the "Terror" attempted: it also amusingly illustrates Scott's lament

that ladies and duchesses were always in the mouth of "this good-natured fopling," as Lockhart described him, in his kindly manner.

From Matthew Gregory Lewis

WELLWYN,
6th January, 1799.

DEAR SCOT,—Your last Ballad reached me just as I was stepping into my chaise to go to Brocket Hall (Lord Melbourne's), so I took it with me, and exhibited both that and *Glenfinlas* [1] with great success. I must not, however, conceal from you, that nobody understood the *Lady Flora of Glengyle* to be a disguised Demon till the catastrophe arrived, and that the opinion was universal that some previous stanzas ought to be introduced descriptive of the nature and office of *the Wayward Ladies of the Wood.* William Lambe [2] too (who writes good verses himself, and therefore may be allowed to judge those of other people) was decidedly for the omission of the last stanza but one. These were the only objections started; I thought it was well that you should know them, whether you attend to them or not. With regard to *St. John's Eve,*[3] I like it very much, and instead of finding fault with its broken metre, I approve of it highly. I think in this last Ballad you have hit off the antient manner better than in your former ones; *Glenfinlas,* for example, is more like a polished tale than an old Ballad. But why in verse 6th is the Baron's Helmet hacked and hewed, if (as we are given to understand) he had assassinated his enemy? Ought not *tore* to be *torn*? *Tore* seems to me not English. In verse 16, the last line is word for word from *Gil Morrier*; 21—*Floor* and *Bower* are not rhymes; in verse 47, what is it the Ghost lays his hand on? If (as I imagine) it is an *oaken stand,* will not People suppose it to be a close stool? In 48, I cannot make out the third word—So much for *St. John's Eve.* Bell was to have sent me down the first sheets of *Goetz,* but I have not yet received them.[4]

The "Monk" as critic

For my own part I have done nothing in the Ballad way, except that one morning while I was staying at Brocket Hall, everybody else being employed in rehearsing a private Play, which they were to perform in the evening, I was left alone, and amused myself in versifying *The Gay Gold King,* a story, which, I believe, I told you at Edinburgh. However, I have only done a third part of it yet. This same private Play was the most entertaining performance at

[1] Scott's first Ballads. [2] Censor and Harveian orator. [3] Scott's second Ballad.
[4] *i.e.,* Scott's version of the Goethe tragedy, the publication of which Lewis arranged.

which I ever was present. It was written by one of Ld. Melbourne's sons, a boy not fourteen, and was surprizingly clever, full of very laughable incidents, and very entertaining Dialogue; and the lad himself played a Brewer in it most capitally. Then we had, by way of Interlude, the story of Ld. Melbourne setting his House on fire, which concluded with a Ballet by the performers; and the whole closed with *The Mock Doctor*, in which William Lambe played the principal character very happily, and spoke an Epilogue of his own writing, containing some very good lines. I have not passed my time so pleasantly for a great while as during the few days which I spent at Brocket Hall. I have not quite left off dabbling in Theatricals myself. As to the German Play, Sheridan is so vexatious and uncertain that I want to give up the bargain, and have nothing to do with it.[1] But Bannister and I are very busy in cooking up a Farce for his benefit, which I wrote many years ago, and which he thinks he can do great things with. However, I only mean it, at any rate, to be played for one night this season. It is a sort of thing which must either take extremely, or be damned entirely. Bannister is to be on the Stage from beginning to end. He plays *two* characters: one, a dissipated drunken officer; the other, a formal, sanctified Quaker. The title is *The Twins*; and I have trumped up a Prologue for Bannister which he is delighted with. . . I know not "*at what particular reasons you guess*," but my reason for not wishing *Glenfinlas* to be dedicated to the Duchess of Buccleugh without her knowledge was that she took huff, some time ago, about some want of attention in me—I forget what; and we were very cold. However, last year she was extremely civil, and invited me to dinner, though I did not chuse to accept the offer. Do you know Lady Douglas?[2] And if you do, is she not a favourite with you? There is scarcely anybody of whom I have an higher opinion.

Does not "*a Border Ballad*" sound too much like "*a bawdy Ballad*"?—Yours sincerely, M. G. L.

JOSEPH RITSON'S UNFAVOURABLE ORTHOGRAPHY

NEXT, hot from the publishers, comes "this half-crazy pedant, this narrow-minded sour and dogmatical little word-catcher" as the genial Lockhart sums up Joseph Ritson (1752–1803), who hated the Scottish people as heartily as did T. W. H. Crosland of our time. Yet the great antiquary, a Sherlock Holmes of literature, warmed to Scott; and put his marvellous learning at the disposal of the northern ballad-writer.

[1] Scott said that Sheridan, when manager of Drury Lane Theatre, generally paid jokes instead of cash.

[2] Lady Douglas, sister of the Duke of Buccleuch, and a friend of Scott.

His valuable literary MSS., after he died insane, were sold by auction, to the concern of Scott, who tried in vain to trace the *Life of King Arthur* here mentioned. As orthography was one of Ritson's obsessions, his letter is reproduced as written, which may account for the decision of the publishers which he reports.

From Joseph Ritson

GRAY'S INN,
2d July, 1803.

MY DEAR AND HONOUR'D SIR,—I attended the " literary-meeting " of Longman and Rees, for the first time, on Saturday-last, which, i suspect, likewise wil be for the last time, as the assembly appear'd to me to consist of a parcel of fools : which is the character sometime since giveën me of it by William Godwin. Here, however, i receive'd your highly acceptable letter, incloseing your delightful version of Herbert Kennedy's " *Praelium Gilliecrankianum.*" You may be assure'd, if it be ever printed by me, there shal be no *blank* in the *first* stanza ; but, with respect to the *eighth*, i know not what to say, without applyeing to yourself, with great humility, for another line, if the present rime cannot be rendere'd more analogous :

" To course like *stags* the lowland *whigs :* "

this, my dear Sir, cannot remain, for your own sake : all the rest being conceived in your usual fluency, which i have ever regarded with pleasure and admiration.

At the same time, i had put in my hands a large-paper copy of the new edition of *The minstrelsy of the Scotish border*, in three volumes, for which i beg your reception of my most respectful and sincereëst thanks, though, haveing an utter aversion to a large-paper book, i must beseech you to permit Longman and Rees to present me with a small-paper copy, which i shal preserve, with due respect and attachment, as long as i live : it shal be elegantly bound and, fortunately, with the admirable ornament of " Hermitage-castle," which they, readyly, gave me, at Cadell and Davieses, on receipt of the former edition. Your bookselers promise'd to send the work, along with Thomas Campbell's *Pleasures of Hope*, but it is not yet arrive'd.

I have put into mister Longman's hands, at his own request, for the opinion of some critick he is use'd to consult, my *Life of king Arthur* : but, whether the partners, to whom i was recommended by our worthy friend, doctor Leyden, wil undertake the

publication, i much doubt, as mister Longman thinks my *orthography* unfavourable to its sale, and mister Rees was apprehensive i should treat the Welshmen with too much familiarity—an apprehension i confess, wil turn out to be wel founded.

I was admited into the duke of Roxburgh's library, by means of our good friend, George Nichol, in order to collate his graceës black-letter copy: which is more different from that in Ramsay's "Tea-table miscellany" than you would have been apt to imagine, not one single stanza being left according to the authour's original copy; not that i mean to say it is not, frequently, improve'd by Ramsays or whomsoevers interpolations or variations. . . . Your much obliged and ever grateful humble servant,

J. RITSON.

From the same

GRAY'S INN,
8th July, 1803.

MY DEAR SIR,—. . . Longman and Rees wil have nothing to do with my *Life of king Arthur*: they appear to me a couple of fools.—Most sincerely yours,

J. RITSON.

ON TYRANTS—LITERARY AND VULGAR

HERE is another candid critic of the Scot in the (then) popular person of Professor William Smyth, lyric writer and historian, who used to delight his frequent guests with stories of the wit of Sheridan, with whom he had, when a tutor to the dramatist's son, many skirmishes while trying to extract his arrears of salary. "The Conductor," whom Scott had been defending to the Professor, is, of course, Francis Jeffrey, of the "Edinburgh."

From Professor William Smyth

PETERHOUSE, CAMBRIDGE,
Dec. 12, 1806.

DEAR SIR,—You have quite relieved me about Jamieson's Book, and I am extremely obliged to you for your letter. We must still, however, do whatever we can to promote the success of it. But I could make nothing of a Review of such a Work as this, and even to save J. from the foul Fiend I cannot possibly attempt it. I am writing however to Oxford to see if I can get any assistance, and you shall hear again from me.

You surprize me much by telling me that your Friend the Conductor can feel the Merits of Poetry: from all I had seen of his Observations on Poets, living and dead, I had concluded him to be

a very coarse-minded man (excuse the freedom with which I write) like your celebrated Millar, for instance, and many others, particularly from your part of the Island, whom one has met in their Books or Society : able men, no doubt, but as incapable of speaking of Poetry as your own William of Deloraine would have been—like him, good at need ; by all means to be sent for if there is anything to be knocked down, and not (I think) else.

It may be otherwise, as you say, but this will only make matters worse. And, indeed, whatever they may have done on subjects of Poetry, your Friends have not borne their Faculties meekly on all other occasions. Like the Slave Driver, they have wielded a Lash which they knew could not be resisted, and the Effect upon the Mind has been the same. It is all for the good of the Plantation, says the one—of Literature, says the other. I am fighting only for the benefit of Europe and Peace, says Buonaparte.

What animals we are ! And now, all these Tyrants great and small, literary and vulgar—I wish they were but all in Heaven, and the world left to us Minstrels and Sonneteers. We would make a much better thing of it. And so there's an Apotheosis from your Friend and his brother delinquents, and let me not be pistolled like little Moore.

But to business and poor Jamieson. Horner wrote me a very kind Note about him, and would do him any kindness in his power. And you will be so good as to apprize me, when any efforts can be made for him by those who have not been connected with your Emperor Lord Melville, who is not yet, I hear, deposed.

Give me due notice of your approach, and I will get a room for you in the College, and you shall stay till you are tired of us and see our Monks, our Monasteries, and what are the customs at Branksome Hall. But what must I confess to you ! I cannot shew you a single person that ever wrote a single stanza in his life or cares a farthing about such things. Mathematics here are like metaphysicians with you. For my own part I never hear more of the Muses while at Cambridge than I should in Lapland—nor as much according to Gray's account.

No poets at Cambridge

Adieu ! you give me a title to which I have no right—not being in Orders. My Muse preaches a little in public, but I myself never. Once more adieu ! and believe me, dear friend, very sincerely yours,

Wm. Smyth.

HAYLEY TURNS ON ANNA SEWARD

THIS is a letter from William Hayley, poet and biographer of Milton, Cowper, and Romney (he was himself offered the Laureateship), condemning Anna Seward, after so many years of mutual hero-worship; and revealing a curious instance of the publishing liberties of the time. Hayley's first wife had no children, and adopted her husband's natural son. Later she developed mental trouble, a separation followed, and she died in 1797. Anna Seward's letter, which is the subject of his protest to Scott, was published in her *Correspondence* (1811); and has this passage, published in Hayley's lifetime: "Fire in her affection, frost in her sensations, she [Hayley's wife] shrank from the caresses even of the husband she adored. Hence, while she had a morbid degree of tenaciousness respecting his esteem and affection, she was incapable of personal jealousy; and would amuse herself with the idea of those circumstances, with which she could so perfectly well dispense, being engrossed by another."

From William Hayley July 16, 1811.

MY VERY DEAR AND ADMIRABLE SCOTT,—Your kindness in allowing me a place in your honorable band of fifty has filled me with the most pleasing sensations of friendly gratitude and pride.[1] I exult in the Idea that I am not utterly unworthy of such Distinction, because I truly delight in the productions of your Genius, and take a most cordial Interest in your Welfare, and your Glory.

The Voice of Envy has suggested to you that your Renown is ephemeral, and your Modesty has honoured the calumny too much by seeming to apprehend it may be true. But trust me, you will ever be a Prime Favorite with the genuine Lovers of true Poetry as long as our Language endures. Your Influence over the Heart and Fancy is derived from Truth and Nature; and forming a part of their Dominion, must, like themselves, be indelible. . . Your portrait of Buonaparte is sketched with the spirit and energy of Michael Angelo. . .

I send you a little incorrect sketch (rapidly thrown on paper by a Lady, in the hope of obliging you by her Goodwill, tho' not by her Talent) a sketch of the whimsical Structure that I formed in this Marine Village as a sort of Halcyon nest for old age. I send it merely to recommend to you the Idea of not making your stable adjoining to your House; but rather connect them by a covered Arcade.[2] That, which you will observe in the sketch, I have found peculiarly useful and Pleasant both in Summer and Winter, affording occasionally shelter and good exercise both for Man and *Horse.*

[1] Refers apparently to a presentation copy of Scott's *Don Roderick.*
[2] Scott was at this time building Abbotsford.

I smile at our similar fondness for that most valuable Animal. It used to be my daily Custom in all seasons to give my Horses their Corn from my own Hand at six o'clock in the morning, for the purpose of endearing myself to the Creatures so conducive to my Health and Amusement. There is a Time for all Things, and at the age of 66 I have found it expedient to resign my Horses after a score of Hairbreadth Escapes of Life by their falling under me and back upon me. Two years and a half have passed since I made this great Sacrifice to Peace and Economy. My friends apprehended it might injure my Health ; but, I thank Heaven, it has had the opposite Effect.

Shall I now speak of the unhappy and, alas ! the malignant Anna Seward ? I will only briefly notice her malignity at present ; and reserve so painful a subject for a future confidential Letter to you, in which I may tell you stranger things, perhaps, than you have ever yet met with in all your wonderful Legends. How could so sensible and so civil a Man as Mr. Constable bring himself to print and publish such an infamous Letter as the fourth in his 5th Volume, to Mrs. Gell. If I were vindictive (but thank Heaven, I am not so) and if I chose to make Law an Instrument to punish a most gross Violation of Justice and Decency, I believe I might obtain heavy damages from the Publisher of such a savage Libel against the character of a deceased Wife, who (between ourselves) was born under Circumstances almost miraculously singular. But more of these mysteries hereafter. I will only say at present : Poor, ungrateful Seward ! May God forgive her for all her manifold offences ! She has shown, but too deplorably for her own credit, *Furens quid Fœmina possit.*"

Miss Seward's letter

Adieu ! my dear Walter. May your Daughters, if they inherit any of your poetic Fire, have all the charms of our deceased Poetess, without any of her Defects ! That God may render you as pre-eminently happy in your Domestic, as you are in your literary Character, is the cordial wish and Prayer of your ever obliged and affectionate,

W. Hayley.[1]

[1] Subsequently Hayley sent to Scott an extract from his MS. *Life* of his son intended for posthumous publication. This relates to his wife ; and says that " from the marvellous Infelicity of her Frame, tho' he loved her as a Bosom Friend, he considered himself as singularly exempted from a strict observance of the nuptial vow." He adds that Seward had taken this opportunity to wound him because she resented his remonstrating with her for her injustice to Cowper. What she, in turn, had to say of Hayley will be found in the group of letters entitled " Of the Hue that is Blue."

HONEY AND GALL

WHAT remained of the writings of the Rev. George Crabbe, after so many of his MSS. went on the fire, Scott liked very well. When the novelist was lying on his death-bed he several times asked Lockhart or Laidlaw to "read me some amusing thing, read me a bit of Crabbe." It was Crabbe who was once the innocent cause of a comic accident. Scott had persuaded him to visit Abbotsford; and he arrived on the day that Sir Walter had been receiving George IV. Scott arrived home with a wine-glass, out of which they had drunk and which the King had allowed him to take as a souvenir, in the rear pocket of his coat. The two poets embraced; Scott sat down beside his friend—and *on the glass*. "His scream and gesture made his wife conclude that he had sat down on a pair of scissors or the like." Crabbe, that curious figure in 18th-century literature, is here writing from his rectory, from which he once absented himself so long that he had to be ordered back by his bishop. This letter, with its subtleties, captivated Scott:

From George Crabbe MUSTON, GRANTHAM,
21 Decr, 1812.

DEAR SIR,—Two months have passed since the date of the letter with which you favoured me, and had I obeyed the impulse of my feelings, you would have received an immediate reply with very sincere and hearty acknowledgements, but Prudence warned me that if I would retain so desirable a Correspondence I must be moderate in my expectations, and not seem by my precipitency, to ask a degree of Attention, and a portion of Time for which I had it not in my power to make reasonable compensation. I am an idle man with few correspondents: you, engaged more and with many. Miss Seward was not the only literary character of the Time who coveted and probably (at least the better part of them) who obtained the Honor and pleasure of reading and replying to your Letters. This is conjecture indeed, but I conceive that so it must be.

Even I, buried as I am, have had letters from various kinds of people, and some not a little curious. Many years since and not long after I published my two first pieces of Versification, a benevolent Gentleman, whom even to this day I have not seen, was pleased to offer me a Share of his domestic Comforts if I would go and spend my days with him in literary Efforts, *i.e.*, in making and amending each other's productions. I was much surprised, and though I had very different views of the Happiness of such situation from those of my Friend, still I considered it as an Instance of Liberality which the best Writers in earlier Times have looked for in vain. I have lost sight of this Gentleman, but shall retain the

THE LETTER-BOOKS OF SIR WALTER SCOTT

These are the original volumes into which Scott had bound his remarkable correspondence—some 6,000 letters and documents.

remembrance of his repeated offers. Not all my letters were of so friendly a kind. A very angry writer attacks me with Bitterness for a few rash lines on Swedenbourg's opinion, and if I credit his Pupil my state is desperate. To relieve my Spirit from the gloom thus communicated, Mr. Pratt, Author of a poem called *The Lower World* and of divers other works in prose and rhyme, sent to me his book with obliging direction where to find a Line of Panegyric in the Performance. This was flattering and yet (on the common principles of Human Nature) calculated to move Envy and stir up the angry movements of the Spirit, for I had but one solitary line of Applause—virtuous, to be sure, was my muse denominated—but the Muse of *Marmion* had 3 lines, was thrice-worthy in comparison ; and however true this may be, how could Mr. Pratt know my willingness to acknowledge it ? Other letters I might make boast of, but these Testimonials from creditable persons are not to be estimated as correspondence ; and therefore as previous poverty would make wealth acceptable in a tenfold degree, so my want of communication with and even of Knowledge of the Men of Genius in our Days renders the opening of an intercourse with you highly pleasant and a motive for much self gratulation. I do accordingly gratulate myself, and reflect on my Acquisition with the Spirit of a Man growing rich. I have a new source of satisfaction. I have an addition of Intellectual Possession, the means of repeated pleasures ; and in times of Humility, should they arrive, a consideration from which a decent Portion of Confidence will always proceed. The man whose Verses engaged him—who, as Mr. Pratt says, commands the Muse of *Marmion*—has something that will serve by way of defensive Armour against the pointed Darts of wit and the poisoned ones of Malevolence.

The "Quarterly" doses

By the way, my dear Sir, why does the Scottish Reviewer (late "Edinburgh" Quarterly) abuse me in his last number ? Whatever he may think, I am a very middling, wellish-disposed, kind of Man, and not the profligate he would seem to hold forth. I thought the Business of these Gentlemen had been with our verse and prose, and not with our dissipations and characters. I know not how I have excited or deserved the anger, tho' I know perfectly well how I shall treat it. Possibly the civility of the older "Edinburgh Reviewer" (of whom also I am ignorant) may have caused a fit of spleen, for there is evidently among even the best of these Critics a Spirit of opposition as well as Emulation ; and I think whichsoever of the two Reviews, the "Quarterly" or "Edinburgh" I

read first on any Author whose subject I am acquainted with, I can foretell what the rival-Brother will observe. This I have seen in their Examinations of you, of myself, of Miss Edgeworth, etc. In all this, however, I mean not to complain, to censure, to be discontented, or to be thankful for whatever share I have had of their Mel or their Fel.[1] I think myself obliged to the Author of the "Edinburgh" critique because it looks friendly; and I think offence was intended by the before mentioned Critic who attacks the morality and good living of his Patient. But I would no more have the one extirpated than the other. I am perfectly satisfied to take the doses as they are dispensed; and tho' I may regard one Doctor more than the other, yet the Bitter-Sweet, considered as an whole, will have beneficial effects. I wish this subject had not come in my way, for I think but little about it; and you, probably less.

Know you, Sir, a Gentleman in Edinburgh—A. Brunton (the Revd), who dates St. John Street. [I have received] Letters before, I believe, with a same signature: Their purpose to ask my assistance in furnishing Hymns . . . or anything that might suit a purpose of those who are making up a Book of Scotch Psalmody. At first I was rather cool, but thinking myself not sufficiently attentive to an obliging request, I wrote for further particulars, and on receiving an answer I try'd some passage of the Gospel. But I failed in my own opinion, and should have thrust the thing from my Memory had I not again received a letter containing much Panegyric and a renewal of the Demand for Verses. What can I do? Let me first enquire, who is Mr. Brunton? That is, in what situation? Should I give my time to a man who has no view to profit, who needs no assistance of that kind? No! If I could help one who needed help, I would do it cheerfully; but I have no great opinion of the public good resulting from this undertaking, and therefore if I did not benefit the Individual I would totally decline the business at once.[2] After all, you write in the measures here wanted so much better than I can do, and so far as I know and believe—better than any man, that if Mr. Brunton be a person whom it would be a duty to assist, could he do better than to apply to you? This is the part of the Subject in which I hesitate. Will you, my dear, enter a little into the business so that I may know something

Doubts of hymn-writing

[1] Mel = honey; Fel = gall.

[2] As to hymn-writing, Scott replied that he disapproved of the "vague and indiscriminate Scripture language" of the fanatics of old. "To my Gothic ear, the *Stabat Mater*, the *Dies Irae*, etc., are more solemn and affecting than the fine classical poetry of Buchanan."

of the Views of the Writer of these flattering letters which I deserve not, neither can I repay.

I give you thanks for your obliging Expressions on my family Indisposition: Mrs. Crabbe is, I trust, in better health; and I, when not too much engaged, my head is tolerably free from Giddyness and Heat. I have this (I know not whether to call it) singularity in my complaint, that it comes on by rapid or more hasty composition, as writing recollections for a Commonplace or Letters of Information to one's family-friends: on all such occasions, as thought quickly succeeds thought, as heat arises in my head and grows soon intense and serves as warning for instant Dismission of Business. Slow composition, hammering out verses, dwelling on an idea hurt me little; copying (which is mere copying) not at all; but writing a sermon, where a mind runs before a pen, is what I can now seldom sit down to: the heat arises in five minutes. Pardon this: I hope I have not a fellow sufferer in you, but you may have heard of suffering fellow to this; and I am interested in my hot-headed Brethren. . . With every good wish and much affection.—Believe me dear Sir, yours very sincerely,

GEO. CRABBE.

A WIDOW'S OFFER

"WHAT are the demands of an honest man to those of an honest woman, and she a widow to boot? I do believe your destitute widow . . . is one of the most impudent animals living," says Scott in his Journal after replying to a customary dose of importuning letters. Another day: "Three poets called, each bawling louder than the other—subscribe, subscribe!" A complete idea of Sir Walter's Letter-Books cannot be conveyed without a few lines from such a correspondent as this, whose forbear was a leader in the battle of 1545. Here is Jemima in all her cool modesty:

From Jemima Layton

GREAT GRANSDEN,
August 12th, 1817.

SIR,—I am fully aware of the advantage you have it in your power to be to authors in the outset of their career, and of the impenetrable nature of Booksellers till an author has acquired celebrity. Anxious to be led by your hand through the thorny way to the Temple of Fame I have sent you a work now ready for the Press. Any alterations *you* think proper to make I have no doubt I should approve of, being a warm admirer of your works. If you will undertake the publication of the work I have no doubt it will prosper: the profit I will entirely relinquish to you. It seems better for authors to

have a work brought out in a mysterious way. I have therefore put no Name. You will perceive I had permission to dedicate to the late Duke of Northumberland: if you consider the dedication as an advantage I have no doubt upon application to the present Duke he would grant me permission to dedicate to him.

You probably can give me some information respecting Sir Bryon Layton who was killed at the battle of Ancrum in the year 1545. I wish to know any particulars respecting himself, and his pedigree, you can send me. I trust, Sir, you will pardon the intrusions and partake of the feelings of an author to whom celebrity will be a very important object. I remain, your most obedient, humble servant,

JEMIMA LAYTON.

"MONK" LEWIS'S EARLY TALES OF TERROR

"MONK" Lewis died in 1818 as the result of an illness contracted in the West Indies, when he was enquiring into some grievances of the slaves on his estate there. When Scott heard the news he wrote in the margin of Byron's Diary this kindly parody of his own couplet:

"I'd give the lands of Deloraine
Dark Musgrave were alive again."

"I would give many a sugar cane
Monk Lewis were alive again."

From Sophia E. Shedden Jan. 24th, 1819.

MY DEAR SIR,—It will be a great pleasure to all the family, if you will kindly fulfill your original intention of inserting some little memorial of my dear Brother in the "Quarterly Review." Anything from your pen will indeed, my dear Sir, be highly valued by us all; but more especially by myself! There has appeared in the "Courier" and the Sunday paper called the "Weekly Dispatch" a most scurrilous attack on the memory of my excellent Brother. It affects to treat of his Literary character, but in a most insidious manner accuses him of "vice, profligacy &c." and in one sentence (evidently off his guard) the author of this vile production thus actually separates the two characters: "The *Monk* was an eloquent evil; but the Man who compounded it, knew in his own soul that he was mixing poison for the generation." In another part he says that "while he could *evade the law*, he cared not what mischief he produced to his fellow creatures." Sir Henry Lushington saw the paragraph, I have alluded to, in Galliani's [*sic*] Paris paper as an extract from the "Courier": he was completely shocked and exasperated by it! I have heard my Brother say that when a child he imbibed his first taste for romance from the terrible

stories of an old nurse who used to gain much of his attention, when he was visiting at the house of a relative of ours—Hanstead Hall, a very fine *old* Mansion, the large Hall of which he has exactly described in *The Monk* under the name of the Hall in Lindenberg Castle, where the Bleeding Nun terrifies the assembled Domestics. I must relate to you an anecdote of my Paternal Grandfather which is really worthy [of] introduction, as a trait of character, in a Farce! This old Gentleman was a *character*; goodhearted, passionate, excessively proud, and still more vain, and with a great partiality for his own opinion. An old maiden Sister, who much resembled him, one day differed with him as to the situation of a House on the Bath Road, and both maintained their opinions with determined pertinacity. When the old lady left the room, Dr. Cyril Jackson said to my Grandfather: "I thought, Sir, you had never been in the vicinity of Bath" —"I never have." "Then pray, Sir, may I ask how you can be so certain as to the situation of the House; for I really think Miss Lewis is right." "So she may be, Sir; but I assure you, if that old woman should once get it into her head that she could by any possible means be in the right, there would be no peace in the family. I therefore make a point to contradict her on all occasions!" Is not that a curious *trait de caractère*? . .

A "trait de caractère"

I wish I could remember any traits of my dear Brother's character to impart to you. I think that the most prominent of his good qualities was *mercy*. This was the *Moral* of his *Monk*, and he exemplifies it himself in his conduct to that good-for-nothing young man Kelly [1]—whose whole story indeed would tend greatly to illustrate my dear Brother's character. I will make a Friend write it, and also the copy of a letter which he wrote to my Father on *The Monk*, and they shall be forwarded to you as soon as I can get the papers from which they must be copied. . .[2]

I thank you for the kind expressions you use concerning my little translation, but you have mistaken me. It was published two years ago, so that all I wished was that you would ask for it at a circulating Library in your *Northern Athens*, as the more copies are disposed of, the sooner Mr. Allman, of Princes Street, Hanover

[1] William Martin Kelly was the son of a woman writer "whose surname began with K," says the *Life* of Lewis, which adds that she wrote a flaming eulogium of *The Monk* in a novel. Lewis undertook the whole charge of the son's education. But the lad was self-willed, and "heaped vexations and disappointments on the head of his best friend" (the *Life*), who eventually settled on him an annuity.

[2] This document about Lewis, which would be interesting, is not in the Abbotsford Letter-Books, and was probably never sent. The letter to his father about *The Monk* was, however, published in the *Life* of Lewis.

Square, will give £25 which he promised to give me when he had sold the first edition. The title is *The Hero or the Adventures of a Night.* I dare say you are acquainted with the original *La Nuit Anglaise*—a very witty French work. A friend of mine was told in a Bookseller's shop a day or two back, on his taking up the *Castle Spectre*, "Ah! Sir, we want very much some Memoirs of that Gentleman, and [I] wonder very much no one has offered anything of that nature to the market. It is just at this season a desideratum in the Bookselling World. In case you should not have seen it, I enclose in this a copy of the most infamous attack on my late Brother's memory; and an answer which was inserted in the same paper. I hear, however, that it originated in the "Courier," and has been copied from that paper into Galliani's [*sic*] Paris paper, where Sir Henry Lushington saw it. It ought to be answered in the "Courier" also! I am indeed hurt at any injustice done to my Brother's memory! . . Your obedient servant,

The "Monk's" Memoirs

SOPHIA E. SHEDDEN.

We have some MS. of my Brother's worthy of publication. Is there not a method of bargaining with a Bookseller, to sell the Copyright for only a term of years? the family keeping possession of the original MS.? Just before my Brother went to Jamaica, he offered the Journal of his former voyage thither to Murray for £2,000, but had received no answer.[1]

CHARLES LAMB AND HIS MOLE-HILLS

CHARLES LAMB surely never wrote a letter without that whimsical touch so characteristic of him. Here it is in this solitary letter to Scott acknowledging a contribution of £10 towards his fund for William Godwin, who had been turned out of his house for debt, and who will be found writing to Scott direct:

From Charles Lamb

EAST INDIA HOUSE,
London, 29th Oct., 1822.

DEAR SIR,—I have to acknowledge your kind attention to my application to Mr. Haydon. I have transmitted your draft to Mr. G[odwin]'s Committee, as an anonymous contribution through me. Mr. Haydon desires his thanks and best respects to you, but was desirous that I should write to you on this occasion. I cannot pass

[1] The price was not modest, nor was Lewis's assessment of his value. But it was a highly speculative epoch in publishing, and his *Monk* and *The Tales of Terror* had been very successful. His *Journal of a West Indian Proprietor* was eventually published in 1834.

over your kind expressions as to myself. It is not likely that I shall ever find myself in Scotland, but should the event ever happen, I should be proud to pay my respects to you, on your own land. My disparagement of heaths and highlands—if I said any such in half earnest—you must put down as a piece of the old vulpine policy. I must make the most of the spot I am chained to, and console myself for my flat destinies, as well as I am able. I know very well our mole-hills are not mountains, but I must cocker them up, and make them look as big and as handsome as I can, that we may both be satisfied. Allow me to express the pleasure I feel in an occasion given me of writing to you; and to subscribe myself, Dear Sir, your obliged and respectful servant,

CHAS. LAMB.

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM AND THE OLD FREE SONGS

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM (1784–1842), who wrote "A Wet Sheet and a Flowing Sea" and other well-liked songs, was to Scott "honest Allan, a leal and true Scotsman of the old cast." He was, at the time of this letter, secretary to Chantrey, the sculptor. In another letter to Scott the poet recalled a man at Kirk, who—after the sermon—loudly exclaimed: "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have"—and dropped a handful of snuff into the donation plate.

From Allan Cunningham BELGRAVE PLACE, [LONDON],
Sep. 9, 1822.

DEAR SIR WALTER,—I am sorry to tell you that Mr. Chantrey is now in North Wales, and that his stay from home cannot well be less than five weeks. His health has been far from good this summer—visits given and received, rich wines, high living, and late hours have combined against him. I hope the fine air of the Welch hills and wild sea coast will amend his health. About a year ago, as a self-defence against commissions for making heads, which wanted eminence or intellect to recommend them, he raised his price for Busts to two hundred guineas—and so it has continued since. He will be grieved at missing this opportunity of making the model of Baron Hume's Bust; and though he will certainly be in Scotland next year, he will be unwilling to convert a visit of pleasure into one of business. I shall inform him of your letter—or rather exercise his pleasure by enclosing the handwriting of one whom he esteems and admires so much.

Chantrey raises his price

I know not that I am doing an act of discretion in adding some small matters of my own to those of my master. Sometime ago I

did myself the honor of sending you two little books containing something resembling Tales which I hope reached you.[1] I also desired the bookseller to forward the Second Edition of *Sir Marmaduke* previous to publication. These and such things as these must be more a matter of annoyance than pleasure, but the shout and the cry and the intrusion of inferior spirits is the penance which exalted ones, I am afraid, are predestinated to pay for their own eminence. If this supposition is true, may the sacrists shield and deliver you.

I am glad to see that Mr. Lockhart promises fifty or sixty versions [*sic*] of the Spanish ballads: such a work executed with the spirit and the sweet and simple beauty of the specimen in "Blackwood" will do auld Scotland honour. The "Lament for Colin" I still think one of the finest things of that kind I ever read. And I am glad that other people think "Xarifa" and one or two more superior: it is only the stronger proof of the excellence of them all.

With my collection of Scottish songs I am making small progress.[2] I have occasionally misgivings and doubts, and feel afraid for the sarcasms of the witty critics both North and South, many of whom, no doubt, [shall] think my attempt a piece of rustic presumption which even moderate success will barely justify. Alas I have not the firmness of my honest namesake to exclaim with Prior—

> Let them censure, what care I,
> The host of critics I defy.

Speaking of Ramsay, I have stumbled on some of the songs for which he substituted others. They are very witty and very immodest. Ramsay perhaps was not so much to blame as we have supposed. What must the lyrics be that Allan Ramsay omitted[3] for the sake of decorum?—Your very faithful and respectful servant,

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

From the same 27, LOWER BELGRAVE PLACE,
10 Octr. 1825.

DEAR SIR WALTER,—I beg you will have the kindness to admit into your library four volumes of Scottish Songs[4] selected with my best skill and illustrated with my best knowledge. It is not, however, such a work as it ought to be; neither is it such a work

[1] *i.e.*, Cunningham's *Traditional Tales of the English and Scottish Peasantry*, published this year, as was *Sir Marmaduke Maxwell*.

[2] & [4] *i.e.*, *Songs of Scotland, Ancient and Modern*.

[3] or tampered with the text of. But Cunningham could not pick a mote out of Ramsay's eye, for he provided Cromek's *Select Scottish Songs* (1810) with "old ballads" of his own composition—a pleasant trick of this ballad-loving age, often attended with magnificent results.

as I might have made it had my leisure been greater and the circumstances of my situation more fortunate. Yet I am pleased with many parts of my introduction, with several of the characters of the Lyric Poets. Many of my notes I think will be reckoned curious or amusing; and many of my emendations of old song will be found much in the spirit and peculiar manner of the original.

I have not been very sensitive concerning our free old songs. I have not excluded all that is overfree and glowing. I wished to preserve an image of the livelier moments of the Lyric Muse when she sang without fear, without scruple and without sin. I hope you will in general approve of my selection. I have everywhere sought to follow the wholesome counsel of nature. In my Characters I have spoken freely and honestly and as I felt myself. I have nowhere sought to say any thing for the mere sake of saying it.

For the use which I have made of your name without your leave I ought to make an apology. I did it with the hope that you would forgive or overlook it. To whom could a preface to Scottish Song be so properly addressed, and whose friendship could shed such honor on my labours or be so dear to my heart as yours.

Should I have more leisure as I grow old I shall make the work more extensive and more worthy. But at present I labour that I may live, and I live because I am frugal, circumspect, and industrious. My whole life has hitherto been one of severe labour; and I have maintained a hard contest with Poverty, and neither of us are victors. Yet I have contrived to furnish a house very prettily where I live in hope of seeing you. A little collection of books begun when I was a lad has gathered up into a kind of library. A wife whom I chose because I loved her and because she deserved it has given me five boys and a girl; and on the whole I am very happy. You see then, my excellent friend, that if I have nothing to thank the world for, I have as little to abuse it about. So the world's a fair world. I have heard of men who sickened with envy at the fame or good fortune of others; I believe it is part of the secret of my domestic happiness that I am without envy: when I see men distinguish themselves and hear Fame sounding her trumpet at their approach I clap my hands and give them a hearty huzza, and I feel myself nothing the worse for it.

His life and home

To fill up the leisure of my evenings—to amuse myself and also to obtain a little money if I can and a little fame too—I have undertaken to write something resembling a Romance. I have heard of a Dumfrieshire lady who declared that she never danced

with half the ease and grace on a floor as she did in her mother's washing-tub. In like manner I am afraid that the space which I have undertaken to fill up I shall occupy far less gracefully than when I confined myself to a short sketch or a brief song. Though I have no hope of coming near the vivid narratives and original graphic characters of the greater Scottish works of that nature, I do not despair of scattering many passages about the volumes which may obtain me a moderate praise.

I see Mr. Lockhart is engaged on a Life of Burns: if I can be of any use to him I shall be very glad. There are many little matters which I have treasured up concerning our great rustic Bard which he may exercise his judgment upon if he pleases. I can easily communicate them, nor imagine that I am conferring any particular favour.—I have the honor to be, your most faithful Admirer and servant,

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

THOMAS MOORE AT HIS GREAT TASK

Two years before the next letter there occurred that historic scene in the drawing-room of John Murray II, when Byron's "unpublishable" memoirs (which he had given to Moore for publication after his death) were destroyed to the last sheet in the fire. Scott—as most people have since—regretted the total destruction of the MS. Moore then began his *Life* of Byron, which he is here offering to dedicate to Sir Walter. On his friend accepting, the biographer replied: "Between two such names as yours and Byron's I shall but realise the description in the old couplet of wisdom and wit 'With folly at full length between.'" As to Moore's references to Murray: it should in fairness be said that the complaint of slipperiness could really have been made by Murray, who acted—as the poet afterwards admitted—in a most liberal and gentlemanlike manner, although the valuable memoirs were destroyed.

From Thomas Moore SLOPERTON COTTAGE, DEVIZES,
Nov. 23, 1826.

MY DEAR SCOTT,—If you had not happened to be leaving London so soon, I think I should have had a chance of seeing you there. Indeed Rogers [1] promised to make out some pretext of business for me, in order to justify my running up to meet you. But Murray (with whom he is my negociator respecting Byron's *Life*) is too much of a gentleman, I fear, to give us even a pretext of business. And this reminds me of a request which I have long been intending to make of you, my dear Scott. If Murray can be brought to any

[1] *i.e.*, Samuel Rogers, the banker-poet.

thing definitive on this subject, I shall not be long in dispatching the book, as our materials, when united, will be ample, and will enable me, I think, to make Byron *tell his own* story, which is not only the pleasantest sort of biography to the reader but by far the easiest to the writer. Now putting your *greatness* out of the question (which, to talk Irishly, is the smallest part of you) your friendship with poor Byron and, I think I may add, with myself, points you out as the person, of all others, to whom my book should be dedicated. Will you allow me to do so ?

Murphy and Murray

Murray always reminds me of an Irish story of a fellow who, being rated by the Priest for having shirked his Easter dues (as he had often done before) gave as an excuse, that he had been very near dying—so near that he had been obliged to get Father Murphy to *oil him* (*i.e.*, to give him extreme unction). "Oh, he oiled you, did he ?" says the other, "faith, and there was no occasion, for you're *slippery enough* without it." Murray appears to me to be equally well provided with this quality, but I trust Sam's *grippe* will be able to lay hold of him for me at last.[1]

Thank you for Gallors' letter : he is an excellent fellow, and I should back him for knowledge of English Parliamentary History [against] any Englishman extant.

You have set Mrs. Moore and me all agog for the North, and we shall, at least, dream of your proposal. Best regards to all around you from ever truly yours,

THOMAS MOORE.

G. P. R. JAMES PLEADS "NOT GUILTY"

THE many copies of novels by G. P. R. James (1801–1860) to be found on secondhand booksellers' shelves are some evidence of the enormous vogue achieved by his works, which number nearly a hundred volumes. The curious parallel for which he apologises to Scott occurs oftener in literature than is perhaps appreciated.

From G. P. R. James

CHATEAU DU BUISSON,
GARUMBOURY EVREUX, 6th Octr. 1829.

MY DEAR SIR,—With this I send you a copy of my new book, *Darnley, or the Field of the Cloth of Gold*. If you will turn to the seventieth page of the second volume, you will find a scene so precisely similar to a most beautiful sketch which you published last Christmas, called "My Aunt Margaret's Mirror," in every

[1] Moore's abuse of John Murray, which was often varied with strong enough praise, is nothing compared with Lord Lovelace's in the original edition of *Astarte*. It is all very amusing—and of doubtful justification.

thing, except its excellence, that it is scarcely possible to believe that the one is not copied from the other. I wrote the book out of England in the Autumn of last year, before the Annuals were published (I believe), but, at all events, I give you my word that I never beheld " My Aunt Margaret's Mirror " till *Darnley* was in the press, when it was luckily pointed out to me in time to call the attention of the public to the similarity myself. However I may admire your works—however they may have given a sort of character to my mind of which I cannot divest it—I would never intentionally even copy them, far less steal from them. The idea of the mirror and the Magician were both taken from the well-known deception, shewn to Lord Surry by Cornelius Agrippa, and though I daresay the world in general will not acquit me of this sort of literary highway robbery, I am sure *you* will believe me innocent.

The mirror and the magician

I am now engaged in collecting materials for a complete series of romances on the history of France, beginning with St. Louis and ending with Louis Quatorze ; but some doubts of their success are beginning to torment me, for I am afraid that an Englishman likes to hear about himself and his ancestors better than any thing else. With you I am sure they would succeed, for certainly never did any one " cast the glamour o'er us " so completely, making things that are strange and indifferent to us at one moment, not only interesting but exciting and familiar the next. My undertaking is also, I know, in no small degree a bold one, for the public will of course be making some very odious comparisons, between my works and *Quentin Durward*, but however I will do my best, and leave the rest to fate, trying " to emulate my great original." . . —Your obliged and faithful Servant,

G. P. R. James.

WILLIAM GODWIN—THE PRODIGAL

At the date of this letter, William Godwin—the author of the powerful novel *Caleb Williams*—is an old man. Shelley is dead ; and there is none now on whom to sponge. Scott, except for his friendship with Byron and Haydon, never came within that strangely-mixed circle in which Godwin figures so sordidly. The reply to this letter sent by Sir Walter, himself bowed down and nearing the end, was " written in the language of kindness," as Godwin acknowledged in a half-whining, half-truculent retort—" The author of *Caleb Williams* (I was idle enough to suppose) was somebody." The poverty-stricken philosopher was assisted two years later through a small official appointment.

From William Godwin

NO. 44, GOWER PLACE, LONDON,
Feb. 17, 1831.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have never experienced any thing from you but the greatest kindness, in the few occasions in which I have been so fortunate as to be thrown into your society, or have taken the liberty to obtrude myself upon your attention. This is the reason of the trouble I am now giving, the purpose of which is to intreat your interference in my behalf, your advice, or your consolation. For the two former I could not possibly apply to any one so well gratified as yourself ; the last, I am afraid, come from what quarter it would, would be but a temporary relief.

In fourteen days from the date of this letter, I shall have completed the seventy-fifth year of my age. Before the expiration of those fourteen days, a volume will have been published of my writing, entitled, *Thoughts on Man, His Nature, Productions and Discoveries*, which (if I am not mistaken) will display the marks of as youthful and energetic a mind as were ever to be found in the books I have written in what are called the vigour of my life and constitution. I am, however, the prodigal who so often serves to point the moral of a tale. I have spent what I had, and have nothing left. Meantime I am conscious (if I do not greatly deceive myself) of powers undecayed, which I am most anxious to apply to the support of my life, and the procuring those slender comforts to which I have been accustomed. But the trade, or the disposition, of the bookseller in London is in such a state as to afford me nothing but discouragement. I published a novel twelve-months ago, entitled *Cloudesley* ; and I think it was more favourably spoken of, in reviews and periodical publications, than was the fate of any other of my books immediately after their appearance. Animated by this circumstance, I set myself without delay to invent a tale of great interest and pathos, calculated to bring into play such powers of development and story, as have been commonly attributed to me. But in vain—I have been obliged to lay my project on the shelf.

His energy at seventy-five

It is commonly said at present that the Cabinet Libraries and Miscellanies, which are publishing by several of our booksellers, swallow up for the time the literature in which they might otherwise be disposed to engage. It has been my habit to work for myself and stand by myself. But at the present moment I doubted of my right to be difficult, and therefore I have given way in this point. I made a proposal to Dr. Lardner, but, after two or three conferences, he frankly informed me that he and his partners had

engaged with a sufficient number of persons of great name, viz. yourself, and Messrs. Mackintosh, Moore, Southey and Campbell, to fix on their publication a desirable character, and that they had resolved that the rest of their work should be executed by persons of inferior importance, to whom they should give lower prices than that to which I should justly be entitled. I applied to Mr. Murray. I saw Mr. Lockhart for that purpose, and disclosed to him the plan of a volume for the Family Library, of which he greatly approved, and told me that he did not doubt it would be joyfully accepted. But, after a lapse of three or four days, he wrote me a note to say that Mr. Murray declined it. I wrote to Mr. Cadell of Edinburgh, from whom I received a most courteous answer, but informing me that his whole means were engaged for five years to come, and that he had been only able to strain a point further, for a novel by the author of *Marriage*, and another novel by a popular author. Thus, my dear Sir, with powers perhaps unimpaired, and a will to exert them, I find myself likely to be laid on the shelf, as a person whose name has been long enough before the public.

The volume I am now publishing had been agreed to by Dr. Lardner for his Cyclopedia, under the name of a volume *On the Philosophy of the Human Mind* by Mr. Godwin ; and I received a note from Sir Jas. Mackintosh, dated August 27, in which he says, he " must now leave the doctor and me to settle the transaction " : but a day or two after, a note was written to me by the doctor, declining the engagement. In consequence I have been obliged to dispose of my volume for £100, which otherwise I suppose would have produced me five times that sum.

The volume I proposed to Murray through Mr. Lockhart was to be entitled, " Lives of the Necromancers ; or, An Account of the Most Eminent Persons, who have claimed for themselves, or to whom has been imputed by others, the Exercise of Magical Power." I can scarcely expect you to believe me, though it is true, that I had chosen this subject without any knowledge of your *Letters on Demonology*, which however appeared before my proposal was actually made. I conceived however that there would still be room for my volume, the object of which was to trace the subject biographically, and to endeavour to ascertain by what steps Roger Bacon, Cornelius Agrippa, and a multitude of other eminent men, came to be seduced into the profession of magic, or to have magical power imputed to them.

More on magic

And now, my dear Sir, for the express purpose of this letter.

The temper of the times, or the state of commerce seems to render my direct application unavailing. My magic rod, if ever I had one, is grown powerless with the new-spring speculators in literary produce; but yours is in all its energy. Would you undertake the generous task to endeavour to prevail with Mr. Cadell, or with any other proper person, to afford me sufficient encouragement to sit down to the novel I have hinted at, to the volume I have described, or to any other work to which I might feel myself adequate? Or would you have the goodness to put me in a way and afford me such advice as might lead me to a more prosperous issue of my overtures, than it has lately been my fortune to have found? My letter to Mr. Caddell simply proposed to him the volume I am now publishing; and I thought, if he declined that, it might have stood as an opening leading to something further; but his answer as above totally discouraged me.

Literary rivalry

Nothing but the known generosity and liberality of your character could have induced me to trouble you with a proposal, which most men would pronounce unreasonable. But you will, I think, not refuse your sympathy to a person, no longer active as formerly in his limbs, but who believes himself to be in the full vigour of his understanding.

One word of explanation allow me to add, relative to Dr. Lardner's expression of not offering me "a lower price than that to which he considered I was justly entitled." I am not tenacious on that point. I have a wife; I need the little house I live in to hold my books and my literary accommodations; I cannot live thus, considerably under three hundred per annum. My labour perhaps might be worthy of that reward; and with that I would be content. —I am, my dear Sir, with the highest respect and regards, yours

WILLIAM GODWIN.

CHAMBERS INTRODUCES BEAUTY—AND A PERSONAL MATTER

INTRODUCING pretty admirers to Sir Walter seems to have been one of the gentle diversions of Robert Chambers (1802–1871) between his writing of countless books and essays on historical, social, antiquarian, and scientific subjects. In Scott's diary is an entry of 1829: "As I came out Mr. Chambers introduced a pretty romantic girl to me who possessed a laudable desire to know a live poet." In this letter Chambers is also introducing a pretty serious matter. The 22-year-old bookseller and spare-time student had the assistance of Scott in his *Traditions of Edinburgh*. Thereafter, say the chroniclers, he poured forth a continuous

stream of books. This may be an instance of cause and effect. Three years later there is another entry in Scott's diary: "Met with Chambers, and complimented him about his making a clever book of the 1745." Therefore it will be surmised that the Author of *Waverley* duly made a note for Lockhart of the "strange thing" that had struck the young plodder from Peebles, who was to found the great publishing firm of his name. Anyhow, in this letter is the spirit that makes young Scotsmen what they become.

From Robert Chambers

EDINBURGH,
March 1, 1831.

DEAR SIR WALTER,—I regret much that, like the duckling which quacked as the Irishman swallowed it under the impression that it was an egg, you were "a little too long a-spaking," and so Miss Maclauchan had taken silence for an invitation, and gone to inflict a visit upon you, to the great disturbance no doubt of the quiet muses of Abbotsford. However, as I suppose you are not yet, and never will be beyond appreciating either youthful beauty or youthful enthusiasm, the visit might perhaps turn out no great affliction after all. At least, I would hope so. I am now going to lay another case connected with national literature before you: one of my own. You know, Sir Walter, what an indefatigable author I have been for the last few years. Though only as yet eight and twenty, and though thrown upon the world (through the misfortunes of my father) without a single advantage but a good education (I began the world at sixteen with two pounds), I have written some twenty volumes and upwards, and raised myself to a condition in life which I am justified in calling comfortable, if not even elegant. I need not tell you what kind of books I have written; I may say, however, that they are universally disseminated over Scotland, and have procured for my name the affection and respect of a large portion of my countrymen. Next to yourself, I believe I may say that I am the favourite national writer of the day in Scotland. Now, it has often struck me that while my works are thus popular and well known, it is a strange thing that none of the leading periodical works have ever deigned to acknowledge my existence. They review books which no one ever sees, and which but for their own notices no one would ever hear of; and they entirely overlook a series of volumes, which, I am entitled to say, have made a decided impression upon the public mind, and at present occupy a considerable space in the floating literature of the time. I am not vain, and never was; and now success puts me above it. But I am a man of the world, who while acting with all

Next to Scott

the caution of a Scotsman as to personal and household expenditure, takes every opportunity that may avail of advancing himself amidst his fellows, and increasing his gains. I therefore think that I may justly claim the advantage of being noticed by some of the higher organs of criticism. I observe that you occasionally assist Mr. Lockhart with a Scottish article for the "Quarterly." May you not, perhaps, some day, find it as convenient to assume my homely productions for a theme as any other? You know them already sufficiently well to render the task of the easiest, and there is not a volume nor a page which might not awaken such recollections in your own mind as must be the very best material for an article. Were the favour one which was to cost you time, or seem likely to be otherwise inconvenient, I would not venture to ask it. But the thing seems to me to lie so much into the newk of your own plaid, that, however deeply I might feel the favour of your directing your favourable notice to my volumes, I feel that I should otherwise incur no obligation which I might not hope to repay. On the other hand, Mr. Lockhart certainly owes me a day in har'st for my contributions towards his Life of Burns and the edition of his poems; and I cannot think that he would look superciliously upon literary exertions which are made rather against than under the favour of circumstances, and which have all of them been ruled by a feeling of respect for his native land.—I am, dear Sir Walter, your faithful and obliged servant,

Lockhart's debt

R. CHAMBERS.

SCOTT ON LITERARY ASPIRATIONS

THIS selection of correspondence from his contemporaries concludes appropriately with one from Scott himself, which shows something of both his patience and his humour. Whether the author of *Belshazzar's Feast* had already turned monk or had merely changed his address, Sir Walter's letter unfortunately never reached him, and back it came, for inclusion in the Letter-Books—and here.

From Sir Walter Scott

ABBOTSFORD, NEAR MELROSE,
21 September, [1817].

SIR,—I assure you I do not merit the accusation of neglecting what I promised. Your poem of "Belshazzar's Feast," which has very considerable merit, I caused to be inserted in the "Edinburgh Annual Register." It is a mere trifle they can afford to give for fugitive poetry, probably two or three guineas at most. But I understood the principal object to be an experiment on the public taste and a

gratification of your wish to lay your verses in some shape or other before the World. You seem to think that if I possessed the will I have the means of patronizing you effectually. But this is a very inaccurate, though not an unnatural, view of the case. I live in great retirement upon a moderate fortune, and with health which is gradually giving way to severe chronic afflictions. I have therefore little the means of assisting you myself, and still less that of influencing others to any effectual purpose.

I requested Mr. Ballantyne (printer, St. John-street, Edinburgh) to send you a copy of the Miscellany (Edinb. Register) when printed. He is a good judge of poetry, and approved of yours very much. I repeat my request to him by this post. I could not myself attend to this matter, having been in the Highlands for some time, and since my return a constant inhabitant of my summer quarters at this place.

I grieve, I assure you, for your acuteness of feeling. But if you know what literary reputation is your aspirations after it would be far less fervent ; and as to your turning a monk in this disappointment, I believe the case would be singular since, though the love of terrestrial beauty has sent many a man to the cloister, you would certainly be the first victim to that of the Muses. I hope you will excuse me for smiling at such a fancy, which, if you had been reviewed some five hundred times, struck up and struck down, praised and parodied, and flattered and back-bitten, for fifteen years, would appear to you as ludicrous as it does to me. At any rate [be] pleased to hold me exculpated on the charge of neglecting poetry which I really think has strong indications of genius.—I remain Sir, your obedient Servant,

WALTER SCOTT.

SCOTT AND HIS ILLUSTRATORS

From Sir Robert Peel .	Wilkie made King's Limner—C. K. Sharpe put forward by Scott.
Sir Thomas Lawrence	Notifies Scott of Academy appointment —His portrait of the novelist.
John Landseer .	Recommends another of his artist sons —Advice on illustrating—An error in *Kenilworth.*
Sir David Wilkie .	Offer to Scott in return for past help— All eyes turned on him.
[*The same*] . .	Death of Lawrence — Last talk on Reynolds and Rembrandt—The painter's regard for Scott.
J. M. W. Turner .	The visit to Abbotsford.

SCOTT AND HIS ILLUSTRATORS

Scott was happier in his friendships with artists than in the professional associations with them which his fame involved. There were so many friends—from the King to an acquaintance in America—who wanted his portrait, that he grew as tired of sittings as his dog Maida, who " had been so often sketched that he got up and went away with signs of loathing whenever he saw an artist unfurl his paper and handle his brushes." Raeburn painted three portraits of the author; Wilkie several; Edwin Landseer, whose father is here sending one of his sketches to Abbotsford, a notable one from memory; and Lawrence, that for the King which caused Scott to wonder " how Sir Thomas has made so much out of an old weather-beaten block. But I believe the hard features of old Dons like myself are more within the compass of the artist's skill than the lovely face and delicate complexion of females "—an opinion contrary to that of the fashionable beauties who flocked to the painter's studio. As for Wilkie, although Sir Walter considered him " the far more than Teniers of Scotland," Lockhart found his portraits of the novelist unsatisfactory. The paintings of Scott vary so much in their finer points that the opinion of Lockhart should be helpful if we are seeking fidelity. The Lawrence portrait he describes as unrivalled. But had he ever seen that study by Graham Lindsay, which, once seen, leaves an etching on the mind?

Of Scott's illustrators, it is probable that the work of Cruikshank gave the most pleasure to the creator of Meg Merrilies, although I have not actually seen a statement by Scott to this effect. But we do know what he thought of Westall's engravings. In reply to Joanna Baillie's vigorous criticisms of those in the 4to edition of *The Lay* (1808)—the indignant dame would have used the broken sword in *Marmion* to rap the artist's skull—Scott agreed that they were badly devised " like almost everything of the kind I ever saw." When it came to the *Lady of the Lake*, a rival illustrator was permitted to try for the high honor of her decoration—for, as Scott said, " if Westall failed in figures of chivalry, when he had so many

paintings to guide him, what in the devil's name will be made of Highland figures? I expect to see my chieftain, Sir Rhoderick Dhu, in the guise of a recruiting serjeant of the Black Watch, and his bard the very model of Auld Robin Gray upon a japanned tea-tray." This was in 1810; and the devil was still concerned in the business in 1831, when J. M. W. Turner visited Abbotsford on that sketching tour of which he here writes. The publisher had secured Turner as sole illustrator of Scott's Poetical Works at 600 guineas for twenty-four designs, which Sir Walter thought was cheap enough. Another letter of Cadell's yields the grain of information that he found the artist "very agreeable, very much a man of business." Turner was not very enthusiastic about this visit, as we see from his letter; and apparently Scott was not optimistic, for he noted in his Diary: "I have written to the man of art inviting him to my house, though, if I remember, he is not very agreeable." Cadell was insistent on the visit, however; and Turner went to Scotland, where was much ado to prevent his dressing Lowlanders in the kilt when he was sketching Smailholme Tower. But the visit was marred by some disagreement. Lockhart, in his record of the visit, does not mention any hitch. Scott, however, appears to have told Cadell of it, for I have come across a note to him from the publisher, saying: "I am sorry that Mr. Turner should have annoyed you all so much—it was most absurd to be in such a pother." What the trouble was does not appear; but for a visit to Abbotsford to be marred was surely a unique episode with such a host as Sir Walter. It was a tour fraught with incident. Poor Turner was not only with difficulty restrained from falling into error over the kilts, but he nearly fell into a ravine. Cadell—thinking perhaps of his 600 guineas for twenty-four designs—was fearfully agitated over both risks.

The first letter here is something of a surprise, as it reveals Scott, for all his enthusiasm for his friend Wilkie, trying to get the Limnership in Scotland for Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, whose pencil and etching needle could produce works as curious as his writings. The next letter is from Sir Thomas Lawrence, telling Scott of his Academy appointment, and referring to his magnificent portrait of the novelist. When Scott was in attendance at the Academy in May 1828, "Sir Thomas [then President] did the honors very well, and compliments flew about like sugar plums at an Italian carnival. I had my share, and pleaded the immunities of a sinecurist for declining to answer." Thus Sir Walter! And the sugar plums still fly about Burlington House in May.

From Sir Robert Peel

WHITEHALL,
July 15 [1823].

Private

MY DEAR SIR WALTER,—Before I got your letter, I had written to His Majesty proposing that Wilkie, as the most eminent of Scottish Artists, should be appointed His Majesty's Limner in Scotland.

The King has signified his approbation, and I cannot help thinking that you will consider the compliment paid to Wilkie a just one.[1]

I will be candid enough to own to you that, had I received your letter before I wrote to the King, I doubt whether it would have convinced me of the propriety of appointing an *amateur*, however peculiar his circumstances or distinguished his talents. If any amateur—Mr. Sharpe, I have no doubt, would have been the most eligible.—Ever, my dear Sir Walter, Most faithfully yours,

ROBERT PEEL.

From Sir Thomas Lawrence, P.R.A.

RUSSELL SQUARE, LONDON,
April the 27th, 1827.

DEAR SIR WALTER,—The Royal Academy, by unanimous acclamation, has done itself the honor of enrolling you amongst its honorary Professors, as Antiquary to the Institution, with the Bishop of Chester as its Chaplain. But I fear the desire of the Members, to be further distinguished by the happiness of your presence at their Annual Dinner, will be denied them. Our worthy Secretary has, I know, sent you the card ; and if by any chance we can be gratified by your joining us, I need not say how much zest it will give to the enjoyment of the Day, and to the pleasure of perhaps the first assemblage of Talent and Rank that this country offers except at the Palace of Majesty itself.

An imperfect resemblance of you is now on the Walls of the Exhibition Room, with which, however, all are tolerably satisfied except the Painter, who now subscribes himself with as sincere respect as Admiration—Dear Sir Walter, Your obliged Friend and Servant,

THOS. LAWRENCE.

[1] On the previous day Scott had received a letter from George IV, informing him of Wilkie's appointment to succeed Sir Henry Raeburn, in which selection His Majesty "is persuaded that you will feel the propriety of the choice."

From John Landseer 8, SOUTHAMPTON ST., FITZROY SQUARE,
9 Dec. 1828.

DEAR SIR,—This will accompany Davie and his dogs; and unless my natural partialities to the painter have blinded me, you will find him to be the real David Gellatley, and no spurious pretender[1]. May I venture to recommend another of my sons to your notice as a historical painter able to lend a hand in preparing the embellishments for the forthcoming edition of the Waverley Novels? He has been a close student at the Academy; is well grounded in the technicalities of his art, and having been a voyage to the Brazils with Sir Chas. Stuart, and resided awhile with the Embassy in Portugal, has seen a little of the world—in fact, he has drawn and painted a good deal of two quarters of it, as you will see should you ever turn over Sir Charles's portfolios.

But, as it would not be quite fair to expect you to rely implicitly on the recommendations of a Father, I have the honor to send, herewith, a sketch from the hand of my son Charles, of the imprisoned Jew in *Ivanhoe*. There are faults in it, as you will see, and as I have pointed out to my son, but were he to be commissioned to paint it, these would be avoided, and it would be—or I flatter myself—in other respects much improved. He has made another sketch of the terrible after-scene in the same dungeon; but being in oil, 15 inches long and on pasteboard, I thought it too clumsy an affair to send.

I can only guess at how far you may have deputed to the booksellers or retained in your own hands the power and the responsibility of superintending the accompaniments to this new edition. If I knew that you held, and meant to continue to hold, the reins, it would perhaps best become me to be silent: but as, in the multiplicity of your engagements, you may be parting with them, I shall venture a few words.

As far as my experience has gone, I have found those mercenary publishing gentry "most ignorant of what they're most assured," namely, the Science of adapting Fine Art to Literature. They seem, even, scarcely to have suspected the existence of such a thing, and to have put all ideas of public trust out of the question. They would regard that word responsibility, which I have used above, as entirely irrelevant in their pouncings upon Milton and Shakspear. The result has been that if you look into Boydell's Shakspear, you find, beside much other wretched mismanagement,

[1] This picture of Gellatley was by the writer's most famous son Edwin, whose portrait of Sir Walter provides the frontispiece to this volume.

no coherence or consistency of parts. Every scene is performed by a fresh set of players. You have as many Hamlets and Macbeths as painters. And if you look into Macklin's Bible "Lo! here is Christ! and lo! there is Christ!" Who shall tell Jesus Christ from Judas Iscariot? These are among the fantastic tricks they have played before the high Heaven of critical discernment. Wherefore I would beseech you not to part with the power—unless you have already done so—of preserving unity and consistency in your characters; and that of adapting subjects to artists, both painters and engravers. The former point I think you may secure, with small trouble to yourself, by giving the entire [illustrating] of one Novel to a single painter.[1]

I persuade myself you will excuse my freedom, Sir Walter, both in what I have written and what I have yet to write. You may, perhaps, recollect that when I had the honor of being presented to you at your hotel in Jermyn Street, I shewed you some small antiques which had been dug out of the mounds of Babylon: but you may possibly have forgotten that in talking over them we spoke of hieroglyphics, and that I had the *boldness*—I hope you did not think I went much beyond—to intimate an oversight in one of the Waverley Novels—*Kenilworth*, I think it is—where the pyramids of Egypt are spoken of as if they were sculptured with hieroglyphics. I merely recur to this in the way of reminding you of a thing that you will probably think ought not to be again forgotten in the revisal; and the rather, as a paper has recently been read at the Royal Society of Literature "On the era of the erection of the Pyramids, and the reasons why they are not sculptured with hieroglyphics." . .—Believe me, Dear Sir Walter, with due Respect,

JOHN LANDSEER.

From Sir David Wilkie 7, TERRACE, KENSINGTON, LONDON,
Janry. 1829.

DEAR SIR WALTER,—I pass over all those disastrous events that have arrived to us both since our last, as you justly call it, melancholy parting, to assure you how delighted I shall be if I can, in the most inconsiderable degree, assist in the illustration of the great work which we all hope may lighten or remove that load of troubles by which your noble spirit is at this time beset, considering it as only repaying a debt of obligation which you yourself have laid upon

[1] Both Sir Edwin Landseer, the animal painter, and his brother Charles, made studies of Sir Walter and his dogs and drawings for the Novels, many of which were engraved by their versatile father, the writer of this letter.

me when, with an unseen hand in the *Antiquary*, you took me up, and claimed me, the humble painter of domestic sorrow, as your countryman.[1]

To come at once to arrangements. The domiciliary visit at the house of Old Morton in *Old Mortality* I mentioned to Mr. Cadell as one I had thought of for a picture. The Old Laird, the Housekeeper, Sergeant Bothwell, and the inimitable Cuddie and his Mither, the two last of all your creations my favorites, are rich enough to satisfy the eye without explanation, and the simple event, an unwelcome intrusion at an unwelcome time, the middle of dinner, is so obvious an inconvenience as scarcely to require your magical description to give it effect. By and bye, for time must be allowed me, I hope to get up a finished sketch or picture of this to engrave from.

But I have a small work complete that may be of use to you, the portrait of yourself which I began when last at Abbotsford—this I am just finishing for your friend, who esteems you much, Sir Wm. Knighton, with whom I had just agreed to engrave it large as a work of art.[2] It might, I think, be also engraved small on Steel; and even if you have another portrait for the work (perhaps you may get Lawrence's, now in the New Gallery at Windsor), still a second and a varied portrait—mine being almost a profile, and treated simply as the Poet—would serve to give an additional version of the physiognomy of the renowned author.

In my late travels, I found all eyes turned towards you and your labours with deep anxiety and interest. Connected with this is an apprehension which is general, but which I, though a humble individual, feel strongly, in particular from dear-bought experience. It is that you will, in your gigantic efforts, overwork yourself. I claim the privilege with you, Sir, of respectfully offering an admonition on this head: miraculous as your powers are, do spare yourself as much as possible. I, when first in trouble, found unceasing labour my only resource, and the lassitude that has never since left me was the consequence. I hear repeated good accounts of your health from Mrs. Lockhart, but the wearied faculties sometimes do not betray their exhaustion till it is too late.

[1] "In the inside of the cottage was a scene which our Wilkie alone could have painted, with that exquisite feeling of nature that characterises his enchanting productions."—*The Antiquary* (Chap. xxxi).

[2] Cadell wanted to reject the portrait when it came; but Scott said: ". . . A scrape be it; Wilkie behaved in the kindest way, considering his bad health, in agreeing to work for me at all, and I will treat him with due delicacy and not wound his feelings by rejecting what he has given in such kindness."

Excuse this liberty from a Sufferer who is anxious only to guard those powers he so ardently admires.—Your very obliged and very faithful Servant,

DAVID WILKIE.

From the same

KENSINGTON, LONDON,
Jany. 11th, 1830.

DEAR SIR WALTER,—Being yourself most honorably and worthily attached to the Royal Academy you will, with your known love for the Arts, be disposed to hear with extreme concern of the loss we have here so unexpectedly met with in the death of your esteemed friend Sir Thomas Lawrence.

It is but a few days since I met with him in Society upon the two last times of his dining from home, in apparent health and good looks, leaving us now the melancholy consolation of trying to recall every word and thought that escaped from him upon that occasion of intercourse destined to be our last. His divine Art always the theme, his last observation to me conveyed expressions of his undiminished homage to the talents of his great predecessor, Sir Joshua Reynolds, who he thought had, with Rembrandt, carried his powers in colour beyond that of all the other Masters. Strange that Reynolds, in whose power all his admiration was then concentrated, should be the one with whom he, in his own great excellence, is now by all most obviously compared.

Upon his Death immediate information was sent to Mr. Peel, who forwarded an express [messenger] with the melancholy tidings to His Majesty, the council of the Royal Academy being also informed of it: the measures consequent upon it now form their anxious subject of deliberation. A public Funeral in St. Paul's, with every mark of honor and respect due to so great a President, appears the spontaneous wish of every one connected with the Royal Academy, where indeed the vacancy his sudden demise has made is such that the very thoughts of how it is to be supplied seem fearful to look upon.

I need scarcely assure you how highly you stood in his esteem. On my return from you to the South I found him at a meeting of the Royal Academy, and nothing could exceed the gratification he showed on receiving the greetings you sent to him expressive as they were of your own good health and well being.[1]

[1] The fine three-quarter-length portrait of Scott by Sir Thomas Lawrence, painted for George IV in 1820, is in the Royal Collection at Windsor Castle.

I feel apology unnecessary in thus obtruding upon you on this occasion of what may be called a public calamity, in which your own generous feelings will induce you so much to sympathize.

With high esteem and respect to yourself, and with respectful compliments to Miss Scott, I am, My dear Sir, your very faithful Servant,

DAVID WILKIE.

From J. M. W. Turner 47, QUEEN ANN-ST. WEST [LONDON], April 20, 1831.

DEAR SIR WALTER,—It is no small compliment to me your invitation to Abbotsford, in manner or purpose; and therefore do allow me to offer you my thanks and be pleased to include in that word whatever feeling may be most pleasing to yourself, for compliments to you can be of no value.

Mr. Cadell has said he would most cheerfully pay the expenses if a journey should now prove necessary, and my having 15 of the subjects induced a thought that it might, without he particularly wished one so to do, be managed by other means.[1] By your letter I read it is desired, and in my furtherance of your wish I will try what can be done (for a feather out of Time's wing). I have a trip to make across the Channel if circumstances permit, and the last days of July do not make the next too hot and impracticable. Therefore, do pray say how long do you think it will take me to collect the materials in your neighbourhood. Many are near, but my bad horsemanship puts your kind offer of [a] poney, I fear, out of the account of shortening the time, and when I get as far as Loch Katrine, shall not like to turn back without Staffa Mull and all. A steam boat is now established to the Western Isles, so I have heard lately, and therefore much of the difficulty becomes removed, but being wholly unacquainted with distance I will thank you to say what time will be absolutely wanting. Mr. Cadell has most probably another list or I would enclose the one he sent me. Skiddaw from Penrith round is the most southern subject, and could be taken in my way homewards or out, or whatever way you think best or most convenient.—I am, most respectfully, yours most truly,

J. M. W. TURNER.

[1] "There is about Mr. Turner's pencil," wrote Cadell to Scott, "what there is in the pen of one other person only, that which renders familiar scenes more striking and lovely than before . . . with his pencil I shall insure the Subscription of 8000—without, not 3000."

OF THE HUE THAT IS BLUE

From Anna Seward . .	William Hayley's degeneracy—A Cypress bud in a bridal wreath.
[*The same*] . .	Her reluctance to publish — Jeffrey's harmful criticism—Criticism of Scott's poetry — Wordsworth, Southey, and Landor — Threatened paper famine—The poet Whalley.
Joanna Baillie . .	Wanted, strong stuff poetry—Description of Miss Edgeworth—Scott as portrayed by Lawrence and Chantrey.
Maria Edgeworth .	Visit to Abbotsford—A disappointing Duke of Athol—Queen Elizabeth whitewashed by Scott.
[*The same*] . .	Abbotsford inundated with visitors—Scott's demure look—Erin's Billingsgate—A bon mot about Byron.
[*The same*] . .	Mr. Blake pushes on civilisation—Result in Connemara—How *Harry and Lucy* was written.
Lady Louisa Stuart .	Library problems—Fear of Scott.
[*The same*] . .	French piracy — Plea for Charlotte Lennox—*The Man of Feeling*—Changing taste in literature.
[*The same*] . .	Scott's *Life of Napoleon*—Corrections—Colonel Holroyd's exploits—A story of Wilkes.
Lady Shelley [2] .	Recalls days in Paris—Her friendship with the Duke of Wellington.
The Hon. Mrs. Cadogan	Sends a pair of comfortable slippers for Scott—Recommends the *Devil's Elixir*—The value of good complexions to young ladies—Political news and treason—A desirable post.

OF THE HUE THAT IS BLUE

LOCKHART speaks of Scott holding in great horror the " imbecile chatter and affected ecstasies of the blue stocking generation." The statement suggests that the biographer was either in one of his mordant humours when he wrote the opening pages of Volume III of the *Life* ; or that the Blue-stockings of Sir Walter's day possessed less ability and attractiveness than those who sat (metaphorically and actually) at the gouty feet of Dr. Johnson. The truth probably is that Scott disliked the epithet rather than the ladies who gave it distinction, for there were undoubtedly Blue-stockings among his fair friends. These compare to advantage with Mrs. Montague and her circle, with whom the Oxford lexicographers first associate a title of such wide application and commonly mistaken origin. If the Author of *Waverley* had not himself revealed his fondness for the society of cultured women of position, it has already been indicated in this volume. " A great number of ladies of the first rank were present," he writes in his Journal on one occasion ; " and if honeyed words from pretty lips could surfeit, I had enough of them. One can swallow a great deal of whipped cream, to be sure, and it does not hurt an old stomach." The correspondents in this group may stand for those fair friends who were of " the hue that is blue " ; and some could prettily mix their honeyed words with sparkling wit.

Those one-time flatterers of each other—William Hayley and Anna Seward—have already been introduced ; but at a time when the former was complaining so bitterly to Scott of the ungracefulness of the Swan of Lichfield. In the first letter of the following group she is dealing Hayley some mighty thwacks, with a side-kick for Dr. Johnson, whom she had known well and concerning whom she supplied copy to Boswell. Two letters of Anna are enough for any book, although someone once published six volumes of her pontifyings. But in all the six tomes there are not any quite like these new ones for downright Sewardism. And the marvel is that just as one is getting furiously angry with her she drops naturally into some shrewd observation or quaint humour that instantly melts

one's wrath. The last paragraph of the second letter alone is sufficient recompense for pursuing this swan in her heavy flights. After Anna comes Joanna. This greatly esteemed countrywoman of Scott—Miss Baillie—we have also met; and her letter also introduces Maria Edgeworth, the Irish novelist, "at present the great lioness of Edinburgh, and a very nice lioness," Scott told Terry after the visit about which she is so excited in her second letter. "She is full of fun and spirits," he added; "a little slight figure, very attractive in her motions, very good humoured, and full of enthusiasm." He admired her stories for "their sort of essence of common sense." But why, one wonders, did she allow them to be tinkered with by her much-married father, to whom she was so passionately devoted—the more, perhaps, because he five times "braved the altar and the breeze." Our modern feminists —she was an early one—would have had too much spirit to allow such paternal pedantry.

Both Lady Louisa Stuart and Lady Anne Barnard, who have also come direct from the Letter-Books, were successors of Mrs. Montagu in that they kept open their fashionable houses as literary centres. Scott was very fond of these ladies; especially the former, who inherited many characteristics (including her ability as a letter-writer) from her celebrated grandmother Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. Lady Louisa was crossed in love, and was not allowed to marry the Colonel she adored. But she lived in vigorous and brilliant spinsterhood for ninety-four years, and only committed one sin so far as I know (or care about): she destroyed many of her papers, which—judging from her *Introductory Anecdotes* in Wharncliffe's edition of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's works—is a real loss to literature. Once, when she received a legacy, she handed over £5,000 of it to her sister's children, insisting that her generosity was no sacrifice, because "one need not consider one's progeny at past two and forty, especially when one has not yet seen Monsieur *leur père*"!

From Anna Seward [LICHFIELD,
March 26, 1806.]

MY DEAR SIR,—. . . Mr. Hayley has sent me his last publication, *The Triumphs of Music*. Ah! I cou'd well have excused the present, since I cannot flatter, and am sorry to mortify. The Poem is longer than the *Triumphs of Temper*, but it is a dull Bristol stone compared to that bright diamond. It affords a melancholy proof of evaporated

Genius and of utterly superannuated Judgement. The decay of each has been gradual in Mr. Hayley. It commenced several years ago, with a feeble Elegy on the death of the great and good Sir Wm. Jones. There I first perceived that mixture of inflated with meanly familiar expression, and that incongruity of metaphor which have deeply tainted his subsequent compositions, both in prose and verse. The *Life of Milton* is the most exempt, but even in that work, valuable as it is, want of judgement and of self-owed dignity, too often betrays a weakened mind. He coaxes Johnson's idolators by stilted epithets which impute to him a degree of moral perfection wholly inconsistent with the just charges brought against him by Mr. Hayley concerning his biographic and critical injustice.

Hayley and Dr. Johnson

In the introduction and in the notes to the *Life of Cowper* editorial dotage is everywhere prevalent. Such sugar and treacle praise!! such lavish iteration of applausive epithets!! "*great* and *glorious*," "revered, sublime, unrivalled, matchless!"—such labour to buckram out that unhappy Enthusiast, that ingenious, interesting and often elevated, but not *first*-rate Poet to the dimensions of our so far transcending Milton to whom Cowper bears *no* resemblance except that the best work of each writer is in blank verse, but in very dissimilar style. Cowper's bold and animated, but rough and careless. Milton's artfully winding thro' all the mazes of Harmony with varied pause and sonorous grandeur. *The Triumphs of Music* is the ne plus ultra of Mr. Hayley's degeneracy, so lamentable in *him* who once and long, amongst our *then* existing Bards, shared the palm of poetic fame with Mason and Darwin. This strange composition is a chaos of ludicrous absurdities, mighty *seriously designed*, on which scarcely one ray of genius gleams. The versification is hard and jerking; the epithets generally unappropriate, and wholly inconsistent with each other; the metaphors ridiculous, witness one taken from the *toes* to illustrate kissing—

> Intoxicated Friendship made a trip
> He touched in blind temerity her lip.

From this chaotic mass an apparition of a mother and *no* mother—two purses, an old maid, and a parrot at prayers, pop up their heads challenging reverence, admiration and applause. Possibly this quiz of a poem may obtain sale and circulation amongst the Methodists on account of its eternal hymns and praying sonnets, which, like the tenets of that insane Sect, caricature the fair face of genuine Religion.

Here has recently been a melancholy insinuation of a Cypress bud into a bridal wreath. In January last an interesting young Lady of this place was married to a Major Hotham, a young man of Family, pleasing in his person and with a cultivated mind. Her Guardian Friends, charmed by an Alliance so flattering, made a splendid wedding. Five or six carriages, gay with bridal favors, set our little City a-gape. A Hearse accidentally preceded the Cavalcade, and the Bride shuddered amid the trophies, to hear the funeral bell tolling amid the bridal peals. That day six weeks Major Hotham *died*. The circumstances drew from my contemplations the following lines which, if I have not a parent's partiality for them, have some poetic merit.

[Here follow 23 lines of Cypress blossoms from Sewardian poesy.]

I shall add the above lines to that large manuscript collection of my unpublished verse which in the horror of that trouble and solicitude, which always attends Publication, and of the ridiculous strictures of anonymous criticism, I leave for *posthumous* appearance. Believe me constantly, your most obliged friend and servant,

ANNA SEWARD.

From the same

LICHFIELD,
April 28th, 1808.

Two of your charming letters, dear and illustrious Friend, now lie unacknowledged before me. Since I received the 1st of the 12th of March, I was, during some time, oppressed by a low fever, which made me incapable of considering the proposal which you were so good to state to me from Mr. Constable. Within these few past days my disease has nearly left me, and I have written to him on the subject at full and inclose that letter that you may throw your eye over it. This I do in preference to going over the ground again on this paper. It is 12 years since I regularly published, tho' in the interim, fugitive verse of mine has frequently appeared. If the furor of writing be sometimes upon me, that of publication never was, and when in former years I resolved to venture, it was with strong reluctance; for ah, dear Friend, I possess small share of that gay stoicism that steels your peace against critical injustice. If Mr. Jeffrey reviews *Marmion* with his accustomed tastelessness, flippancy, and malice, I hope I shall never see that handywork. When I think of the injury such senseless and acrimonious strictures do to the poetic literature of this period "My blood is liquid flame." The

Jeffrey again

full spring-tide of your popularity carries *you* above their assailance, but from how many a brow of genius have they torn the well-earned laurels! If your little Lawyer, Poetastor, and Critic is as absurd and flippant upon *Marmion* as he was upon *Madoc*, that absurdity and flippancy may indeed acquit him of *National* prejudice but cannot of injustice and incompetency to the task he undertakes. The new sin cannot cancel the former guilt . . .

I wish I had recanted my hasty and therefore *false* criticism on the loss of Marmion from our Cathedral.[1] A few days after I sent you the letter which contained it, recollection and conviction flashed on my mind, "like lightning on the midnight Traveller," the *necessity* of fulfillment respecting the dire prophecy of poor Constance's song. I perceived, at the same instant, the probability that Marmion's family wou'd deposit his Remains, his *supposed* Remains, in this our neighbouring Cathedral. So you are acquited without the necessity of receiving, as your apology, the desire of a slap at Lord Brook; and from accusing you, we rest your Debtors for the honor you have done us. That I retracted my charge long before I heard the pleas against it, I call, *as witness*, the Lady who lives with me, in the place of my wedded Cousin, and who, with the most melodious and spirited recitation, assists me in reading *Marmion* aloud to select companies here, as she did formerly in *The Lay*. Come, Madam, your hand to my assertion.*—E. Fern.

Seward calls a witness

[*To this assertion is solemnly affixed the signature of Miss Fern, Anna Seward's companion.]

How miraculous is your rapidity of composition! That what must, on the whole, be considered as far the grandest of the Cantos should have been composed in *four* days. But I cannot think that the interior of the Poem was of necessity over at the death of Marmion. From the first and all through, the Palmer is with me the *most* interesting object. So seems he with everyone whom I have talked to on the subject. Equally brave with his treacherous Foe, and so long suffering, and so deeply injured, we long—nay we expect—to see him rise superior to Marmion in military glory, as he had ever been his superior in virtue. We want to see De Wilton in present tense importance amid the gloriously animated Battle. It is *him* whom we expect to see turning the ebbing tide of conquest on the Foe; to find the ear of the dying

[1] In the poem Marmion is slain "on Flodden plain," and his body taken to "Lichfield's lofty pile, where his tomb was destroyed when "fanatic Brook, the fair cathedral stormed and took" [*i.e.*, in the Civil War].

and guilty Hero assailed with shouts of "De Wilton," coupled with that of Victory; to see him led to the Court of England, covered with Laurels, and presenting to Henry the exculpating paquet. What might not your genius have done with poetic pictures of such a Bridegroom and Bride. You, who have so finely painted that Sun of Knighthood in *Eclipse*, with what delight had we observed him emerging in all his glory from your light-bestowing pencil, if you had been pleased to have given us another canto for that purpose! But, after you have set before us so plenteous and rich a poetic banquet, it is unreasonable to repine that the dessert is of Orlean plums, rather than of those nectarines and pine-apples, which the warm conservatory of your imagination might have supplied.

Will you pardon, in one of the most ardent of your Admirers, and the most obliged of your Friends, my unworthy self *another* presumption. The *only* lines in the battle-scene that I cou'd wish altered are:

> Of sudden and portentous birth,
> As if men fought upon the earth,
> And Fiends in upper air.

Imaginary objects seem to me weak in comparison of the *real* horrors of such an onset. I should have liked the passage better if it had ran thus:

> And such a yell was there!
> O! life and death were in the sound,
> Danger, dismay, recoil, and wound,
> And triumph and despair.

I see Southey's *character* in exactly the same point of view that you do, and his eloquence is very forcibly illuminated by grand flashes of solemn imagination: but wit and the easy play of fancy are with *you*, and the generous emanations of benevolent kindness:

> The sterner virtues o'er his steady breast,
> Sit, like the Falcon, cowering on her nest,
> But all the sportive graces that reward
> Our charm'd attraction at the social board—[1]

these have their home on the Tweed.

Is it possible that Wordsworth can be Southey's superior in conversation? so widely as it is the *reverse* in their writings. In yours, and in Southey's all is perspicuity. In Wordsworth and still more in the Author of *Gebir* (a poem most unaccountably admired by the Bards of the Cumberland lakes) we find meaning frequently lost in a dark maze of words. I heard from Southey last week.

[1] From Goldsmith's *The Traveller*, altered to suit Seward's purpose.

He was then just returned home, without making Lichfield his way back, as he had promised. He pleads an unforeseen load of business detaining him in London, till it became necessary to seek his beloved habitation in the directest course. You will conceive our disappointment. In this letter he speaks not of the works you mention, tho' I know he is about them. Great *poetic* designs are floating in his brain, but he says he cannot afford time or money to give them " a local habitation and a name." He tells me of what must prove a severe frost upon literature—the alarming scarcity of *paper*; that not more than a 6 months consumption is in the nation, and no prospect of procuring the rags from the Continent of which it has ever yet been made. This is *another* mischief added to the countless number of this destructive, this detestable, War. . .

Alarming news from Southey

I do not wonder at Mrs. Scott's terror at the death of a mad dog under her windows. My dear deceased Friend used to say that a mad dog, a mad bull, and the Plague were my three terrible Graces. To be sure my imagination has loved to brood on them from my infant days, since at three years old, a large mastiff, with that cry at his heels, was killed with my frock in his mouth. I perfectly remember the circumstance, and the indefinite terror it inspired; and since, at 7 years, on hearing my father read a paragraph in the papers, stating that it was reported the Plague was at Bristol —" Papa, what is the Plague ? " " My dear, it is Death riding on his pale horse thro' the streets of a City." Not less than by this imaginary personage, was I four years after impressed by a never wearied perusal of the Sadler's history of the Great Plague in London, given by Defoe. . .

I thank you fervently for your designed indulgence to the whim of my Friend Whalley.[1] He is an enthusiast in everything he likes, and your works are of the number. Not having heard from him these 2 months, yours is my first intelligence of his design. He is not a *deep scholar*, but his imagination is vivid and elegant; his manners polished; his smile prepossessing; his heart benevolent; and his muse—a little slip-shod nymph, with a garland of fresh field flowers on her head. His seat is the most curious and most idyllic scene. I know his Sylvan taste is exquisite. He mourns the recent loss of his second wife. To her and to her predecessor, he made a kind and tender husband, tho' their wealth, and *not* their charms, must have been his matrimonial inducement. On Thursday I expect my lately-married Cousin and her husband,

[1] Thomas Sedgwick Whalley, poet and traveller.

Major Burrowes, to pass a fortnight with me. During their visit I shall have no leisure for my pen. Adieu, dear Bard and Friend. Present me kindly to Mrs. Scott and Miss White; and believe me ever, Your grateful

A. SEWARD.

From Joanna Baillie

HAMPSTEAD,
Feby. 2d, 1822.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—You have been always so kind to me that I apply to you with a degree of confidence, whenever I want your good offices on any occasion, which you must not blame me for, being the natural consequence of your own friendly and open disposition. You can now do me a very great favour. There is a friend and old Schoolfellow of mine, whose husband is insolvent and dying, I believe of a broken heart; and she will be left without a sixpence (a very small annuity promised by some friends excepted) and with a family of daughters, who have, till very lately, been brought up in affluence. I have offered to edit for her benefit a volume of collected poems, to be published by subscription; and being anxious to have as much good MS. poetry in the book as may be, I am soliciting my literary friends to contribute. Pray send me something of yours, let it be ever so small! and if you can procure me anything from other quarters send it to me also. All will be thankfully received. I have by me a Copy of *Polydore the Robber*,[1] written by a young friend of yours which you sent me a great while ago. I should like much to have it in my Collection; for it is good strong stuff (I mean *Stuff* in the best sense of the word) such as School Boys and Country Lairds will like to read as well as fine Ladies, and I must not have my vol: too much filled with what is called *pretty* poetry. Perhaps you can prevail on [the] author to let me have it. . .

Strong stuff poetry

I heard how happy you all were in holyday time when Charles and his friend Surtees were at Abbotsford. This last was made very happy and very proud by your kindness; and has lost his heart, I understand, to Mrs. Lockhart, who is the first of human beings in a female form, and full of all perfections. Had the heart been lost to the unmarried sister, we should not, belike, have heard so much about it. If he is happy with *having been* at Abbotsford, a friend of ours, who spent some days with us lately, seems no less so with the prospect of going there, Miss Edgeworth. She is in

[1] Written at fifteen by William Howison, of Clydegrove.

very great request here, as she ought to be, and has been visiting at one friend's or admirer's house after another since the beginning of Winter. I was surprised to hear her say she has never yet seen you *bodily*. You will find her an entertaining, merry-hearted Inmate with a good flow of easy, natural conversation, with stores of information gained by quick observation at home and abroad to feed that flow. Her Sisters are clever Girls with great store of knowledge, and the eldest of the two very pretty. They have a good deal of the Irish brogue, and are in other respects neither English nor Scotch; but by no means offensively so. Miss Edgeworth herself is most amiable regarding those young Sisters, whom she loves and attends like the fondest Mother, and indeed regarding her strong devoted affection to all her Father's family and her Step Mother. The love powders which her Father certainly gave her have not lost their effect after his death. I went yesterday by invitation from Sir T. Lawrence to see your picture and the King's. This last is a very admirable, splendid gallery piece; and yours is the best likeness of you that I have ever seen. Indeed I don't think it could be better. That bust by Chantry represents you as a humourist, this picture as a Poet; both excellent of their kind, but the last the most noble. Since my poor Play of *De Montfort* was brought out and left so pitifully sticking in the mire, after such a creditable outset, I have been once at the Theatre to see the *Gentleman of Verona* and *Mother Bunch*. The first we could not hear at all, tho' we sat in a side box in the dress circle, but the scenery and pageantry were very beautiful, and we had a good hearty laugh at the Pantomime. This is the most memorable thing that has varied my quiet life for this six weeks past. With all kind wishes to you and yours,—I remain, My dear Sir Walter, affectionately yours,

The Edgeworth girls

J. Baillie.

P.S.—Sir T. Lawrence told me he should not venture to touch your picture again until he saw you, so I hope you are to be up ere long that it may be finished. It would scarcely be respectful to Royalty that it should continue long in its present state. It is very honorable for the King himself that he has desired to have such a picture. I shall think the better of him for it as long as I live.

From Maria Edgeworth

32, Abercrombie Place, Edinburgh,
July 24th, 1823.

My Dear Sir Walter Scott,—. . . After a relapse, in consequence of driving all the blood into my head again by writing a worthless

letter to Mrs. E., I at the end of ten days found myself able to travel and got as far as Mr. McPherson's (the son of Ossian [1]) at Belleville, where my sister Sophy—in consequence, I am sure, of anxiety and fatigue in attending on me—was taken ill of a bilious complaint which detained us three days, fortunate in our misfortunes in being in such good quarters with such kind friends and such a remarkably well-bred hostess as Mrs. McPherson.

Do not imagine that our little interludes of illness will have left on our minds any impression unfavourable to the present recollection of our Highland [tour]. No—that was full of enjoyment, and after my recovery from fever and restoration to light and life, I think I enjoyed with double zest the most delightful journey from Forres to Perth : all the way with varying beauties, and historic and poetic recollections.

The Duke of Athol

Our postillion, literary as you described Scotch postillions, stopped at the sight of the stone where Dundee was, or *was* said to be, killed, and again stopped and told us when we were entering the pass of Killiecrankie. Most beautifully romantic pass! And all the drive to Dunkeld—delightful. I did not wonder the fair inconstant left her lack-gold lover for the sake of Athol's Duke when I saw his possessions.

But I once dined with the present duke at your friend Morritt's, and I thought then, when I had not seen his possessions and his fifty miles of gravel walk, that it would have gone hard with me before I could have swallowed his Grace, he looked so very like an over ripe Orleans plum, and said *never a word.*

We must rest one day here in your own romantic city, and another day at Harburn with that honest writer to the Signet and very good natured man, Mr. Young. On Sunday the 27th ins—*after Church time,* pray observe and do not give me up to the scandal-mongers—after Church time, I say, we shall set out for Abbotsford not with the slightest intention of reaching it by dinner-time but with a certainty of arriving by tea-time, supposing Lady Scott's tea and coffee-time to be always at the fashionable hour, somewhere between 8 and 9. I always much prefer arriving at a friend's house by tea-time, instead of dinner-time, because tea is a moveable feast ; and I do not like to keep a circle famishing an hour beyond the dinner-hour. . .[2] With best regards to Lady Scott, and

[1] *i.e.*, the son of James Macpherson, the alleged translator of the Ossian poems.
[2] Miss Edgeworth and her sisters, Harriet and Sophia, were on their way to visit Scott.

your dear Sophia and Miss Scott, believe me, dear Sir Walter, your obliged and affectionately,

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

P.S.—Of no consequence, Sophy is quite well now, and I am able to eat the wing of an ox. But I would rather let it alone—as ungraceful in all but good Queen Bess:

> Whose name and whose memory
> Posterity will bless, Sir,

as the old English song assures us, but I do not well know why, when she was such a tyrant as to keep her parliament on their knees addressing, and to box the ears of women for envy, and men for love. Besides the little accident of cutting off Q. Mary's head, and wiping her pen across Davidson's face when she signed the warrant. I never could bear her in history, but she has been white-washed by an able hand,[1] and an interest exacted for her by shewing the struggles of the woman with the lofty spirit of the queen, which —as it drew down a tear from Burleigh's cheek—might well touch all less ossified against human frailty and human sympathy than a diplomatist and courtier of 70 years training.

Queen Bess white-washed

From the same

EDGEWORTHSTOWN,
Oct. 11th, 1824.

IT is true that there is always something in the misfortunes of our best friends that is not disagreeable to us. Certainly I rejoice, my dear Sir Walter, that you were so inundated with visitors this season, since you made the inundation and all its consequences so entertaining to me. I wish I had been by to see Rank and Wealth fighting it out and you sitting by—*not* to judge the prize, with your innocent look which I could never see without laughing internally.

There is a humorously demure composure at times in the drawn-down corners of your mouth and a lurking humor in your eyes when you vainly attempt to expel from them all expression save that of perfectly polite submission which no portrait could represent. I pitty you for the misery of sitting for your picture, but again your loss may be my gain, and I rejoice that your picture

[1] Miss E. probably refers to *Kenilworth* (1821), wherein Elizabeth is sympathetically treated, though Scott's private references to her are less respectful. He called her an "inimitable virago" in a letter to Kirkpatrick Sharpe. In his Diary, under date 12 Dec., 1825, he alludes to her jealousy of the superior stature of Mary of Scotland; and under date 27 Oct., 1826, he says "she would rather than not keep Calais have parted with her virginity." Davidson = Davison.

is taken. If it be like in your own opinion—no, in Mrs. Lockhart's—pray secure for me a proof copy of the engraving which will, of course, be taken from the picture.[1]

Irish and Scotch eloquence

I am glad you like Erin's Billingsgate oratory, but I cannot set about to look for the cause why Ireland is superior in eloquent expression to Scotland, because I do not believe this to be a fact.[2] Did none of the thousand and one instances from your Scotch novels start up in array before your conscience? Did no voice from Meg Merrilies, none from Effie Deans, none from Nanty Ewart, sound reproachfully in your ears as you wrote those words derogatory of Scotch eloquence. But may be you would not recognise the voices of these personages. I think you never read such " trash " as you once called those novels. You " fear to think of *it*—look upon't you dare *not*. . ."

I have still a farther boon to ask for myself. I want you to tell me whether you think a subject promising which I am turning in my head for another popular fashionable tale, if I can make it into either: *Travellers*—of various classes—with their faults, follies, humors. If I write it or anything else I would publish it anonymously, therefore be so kind not to mention it. While I wrote those last words I could not help recollecting Dr. Baillie's answer to [a] nervous fine lady who called him back as he was leaving her: " Pray doctor do not mention to anybody any of the particulars of my case."

" God bless you, woman, I shall have forgot you and your case before I go down stairs."

If you should be so kind as not to forget my case do pray lend me a helping hand. Throw me a few hints out of your abundance. Above all things hinder me from setting off on a wrong road if you think it will lead to nothing. I have lost him who used to judge for me and give richly.[3] . .

Sophy Fox and her beloved and one of her sisters, Fanny (who alas is unknown to the great unknown—as yet) are setting off for the Continent to see the Rhine, and the *Venus*, and the *Apollo*, and all that must be seen nowadays before people can be happy at home. But they will only stay one year away, and then come to the old end of the fairy tale: " And so they lived very happily all

[1] The one done by C. R. Leslie, R.A., for America (see page 298 and *n.*).

[2] Scott had written: " I wonder how green Erin comes by that profusion of elegant expression which never leaves them dry whether in mirth or in sorrow, and differs so much from the dry sarcastic shrewdness of the Scot, and the Bullishness of John Bull.

[3] *i.e.*, her father.

the rest of their days "—at home must have been always omitted at the end of this sentence ; but it could have been nowhere else.

I commissioned an old lady, who went from Edinburgh to Birmingham last year, to bring back for you a certain bronze inkstand with a Cupid perched on its cover. As I heard no more of it I concluded my old lady had forgotten Cupid as much as Cupid had forgotten her. But just now I have learned from a Birmingham man of bronze that the inkstand I bespoke had been regularly delivered, and I hope it has safely arrived on your library table ?

As I never mentioned it you could not possibly guess from whence it came, or why. The only reason why I thought it worth offering you is that it [is] a model of Petrarch's inkstand—warranted genuine by Lady Jersey, who brought the drawing to England, as Lady Lansdowne told me. I saw the copy of the drawing in Lady L.'s portfolio, and begged my sister to copy it for me. From her sketch I had three or four made by my Birmingham bronze man. He has executed it pretty well, except that instead of joining Cupid's hands, as in the original in an attitude of supplication, he has set his hands in a boxing posture. Some French critic said that Lord Byron "a fait *boxer* les Muses." What they meant by it I do not well know, but I heard this happy hit loudly applauded by the demigods and the whole goddesses of fashion at one of the French Theatres.

A happy hit at Byron

The outer glass of the inkstand should be filled with water ; the tiny cup, or whatever you please to call it, in the middle should be filled with fresh ink every day, provided Miss Scott or your groom of the chambers could remember it. A hard task ! for which he or she, as the case may be, ought to curse me once a week at the least.

Harriet is writing her own heartsful to Miss Scott, but I will leave the presenting her love and respects to you for my own share. . . —Your obliged friend,

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

From the same

EDGEWORTHSTOWN,
April 8th, 1825.

MY DEAR KIND SIR WALTER SCOTT,—. . . From a word or two in Miss Scott's last letter to Harriet we have some hope that this year You—even You, the great U—may come to Ireland ; and if you do, I feel sure that you will come to poor little Edgeworthstown,

though it is in the most frightful flat boggy country—not a legend even or old ruin or vestige of romance to be had within miles of us for love or money. Still I think you will come ; and, in spite of its putting us to shame that you should see how unlike your Abbotsford, we wish it with all our souls. And I would rather lay house and home open to your penetrating eyes and trust you even with all our bulls and blunders than any fool or any middling person I ever had the misfortune to see. What time do you think you can come ? . . .

Pray read *Letters from the Irish Highlands*. They are written by different members of a family who have resided 9 or 10 years in Connemara—Mr. and Mrs. Blake, he Irish—she English. She was a Miss Attersall, London, her father and brother rich, and she and two sisters had, or were to have had, large fortunes. But some bank, in which her father was concerned, broke ; and some contract about bricks ruined them. The sisters are going out as governesses. Mr. Blake has also done too much, I believe, in farming and perhaps in trying prematurely to push on Civilization and improvements for which *improving gentlemen* are sure to suffer—as the cat's paw does in taking the chestnuts out of the fire for ungrateful monkeys. Henry Blake Esqre appears in his letters to be a remarkably sensible, prudent man whom you would not suspect of having hand over head sold a flourishing estate to go and settle in the wilds of Connemara with the triple project of making paradise in the wilds, mints of money by a sunfishery, and his bread in the meantime by a slate quarry, and this was before rail-roads were on earth—on Irish earth. Can any of your sober-faced Scotch speculators compete with this—Hoo ! Hoo ! ?

Mr. Blake pushes on civilisation

Though true Irish, Blake by *name* and Blake by nature, there was a touch of the English yellowly in him got by education and foreign travel, it seems, for on returning from a trip to England he could no longer abide the common Irish car, and he imported an English broad-wheeled waggon with all its bravery ; and it was landed on his shore—and on the sands where it landed, there long it remained, and I believe remains to this hour waiting for something to carry and for new roads to be finished. On the old ones only the despised Irish car can go. But I am very wrong for indulging my idle laugh at this excellent friend to Ireland, as his book proves him to be—especially I should not laugh now he is no longer prosperous. But though I laugh at his waggon I do not laugh at his wane. (Your Beatrice does not disdain a pun—I am

glad of [it]. Many a time has a good pun changed a frown or a sigh into a smile.)

Seriously you will like these *Letters from the Irish Highlands.* The descriptions of the scenery and manners of Connemara—a part of Ireland little known—are admirable, such as could not have been given by any one who had not been resident in the country. . . The anecdotes of the people are fresh from the life—not painted, vamped up old Irish jests. I could swear—if a lady might swear—to the truth of every Irish expression, every Irish characteristic, dialogue or reply.

The letters signed B. are Mrs. Blake's (Barbara) ; A. is Anne, the sister—rather affected—too fine about the rainbow and her feelings and picturesque forever !—till one is sick of being *charmed* with the beauties of nature. But *barring* this you will like *the whole.* There is great variety of talent and knowledge and style in the different letter writers. Liberal views and reasonably liberal views for Ireland without the cant of patriotism. This book being *short* also will do much good. It will make Ireland as it is at this present time better known in England than any book or any speech in or out of Parliament that I have seen or read.

For you it has a peculiar merit—vast materials, of the value of which the authors themselves—not possessing the inventive faculty —cannot be sufficiently aware. These without defrauding the first producers of the raw material are capable of being beautifully worked up so that they could not be known again. . .

I have done nothing and thought no more about my anonymous work. I admire your principles about fibbing—*précepte commence, exemple achêve.* I have been this year and a half, the same more or less spell-bound in stupidity, writing 4 minnikin volumes of a child's book. I conceived that I could, would, and above all should and ought to finish a certain little *work* called *Harry and Lucy* which my father began for his own children some 40 years ago, and I know regretted he had not finished it. I had at various times helped him to continue it—my part being merely to spread amusement through it, while he furnished the solid knowledge and accurate principles of science. The toil, difficulty, mortification I have gone through in finishing these last volumes without him is not to be described. If I had not had the most patient and kind of friends—his scientific friends—I could never have got through it. They have corrected and recorrected, and have sat up till 3 o'clock at this work for me ! ! ! I have no science ; and, as to accuracy, can

" Harry and Lucy "

compare myself only to the sailor who "would never quarrel for a handful of degrees." I trust my friends have saved me from public shame. . . —Ever your obliged and affectionate friend,

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

From Lady Louisa Stuart

DITTON PARK,
February 5, 1825.

DEAR SIR WALTER,—Lord Montagu says you are so strongly against his parting with any of his books that I must write again to appease your wrath: because Lady Montagu and I are just now employed upon the library, like the curate and barber on Don Quixote's, and, perhaps you will suppose, weeding it with as unsparing a hand. Yet you cannot conceive with what constant fear and trembling (fear of you) I proceed. I assure you Calvin's folio-works in their original Latin remain untouched; the *Independent Whig* and Cato's *Letters* are only moved a little out of the way to a top-shelf; and far less shall I presume to meddle with *The Craftsman*. Then, as most of the books under review are French, I do not move a step without consulting Voltaire and *Le Dictionnaire Historique*, and throw out none except those pronounced "platement écrits—des lieux communs—des plus médiocres—ramassa des gazettes du tems, ouvrages pitoyable," and so forth. Several have been saved by one or two good prints, some even by a good clear type. Scipion du Pleix's five folio volumes were taken down, but I felt such an awe of your displeasure that I reprieved them till you came to England; and should have done the same by a huge *Inventaire des Roys de France* per Jean de Serres but for the following anecdote: "On dit que c'est ce livre qui degouta Louis Treize d'appendre l'histoire." Wise men's biographers often tell us how they first acquired a taste for reading. Now if all the poor souls who hate it would each point out the particular book that made books in general bugbears to his childhood, don't you think a catalogue raisonné of the authors might be useful to the educating age, and a valuable supplement to Mrs. Trimmer's *Guardian of Education*? Especially if the methods practised to drive them into the heads of the patients were also set down. To conclude, I was on the verge of condemning to sale a work on *La Science Universelle et la Vraye Philosophie* when looking at the heads of chapters I spied: "Comment il semble que les sorciers fassent pleuvoir ou gresler," and put it up again with the utmost veneration. The fact is, they are overrun with the second or third-rate works of Louis 14 and Louis

In an old library

15's days; utterly unreadable yet not old enough to be curious; nay, and with the French trash "Englished" or "done into English" a hundred years ago. I found yesterday *Plato, Englished from the French of Mr. Dacier*, upon grievous brown paper. French prose-translations of Latin and Greek poets abound; so do tribes of the stupid common-place novels. Abbé Prevost's, most of which I defy any girl of fifteen with ever so much love in her head to labour through, are the flower of the flock. Will you really deny the wisdom of exchanging two or three dozen of these for—*Reginald Dutton* let us say, or *Inheritance*? I am too discreet to go any higher in Mr. Constable's list.

Lady Montagu charges me to add that they were happy enough to have two copies of Jean de Serres, and one, of small size, beautifully printed, is kept in case it should ever meet with somebody more patient and persevering than Louis the thirteenth. On the whole, pray believe that we are doing no material mischief, committing no rash depredations, parting with nothing either you or Mr. Heber could value at sixpence halfpenny. And always think me,—Yours most truly, L. STUART.[1]

From the same CHISWICK,
Septr. 4, 1826.

I FORBORE writing to you when I wished most to do it, dear Sir Walter, for there are moments and feelings upon which none but the nearest friends, and hardly they, ought to intrude: but God knows you were as much in my thoughts all the while as if I had told you how I felt for you.[2] I saw Mrs. Lockhart in town, and afterwards heard from her, for I could not help asking whether the newspaper story of your being King's Printer had any truth in it. By her answer I found it was what Lord Montagu calls a mare's nest. However she wrote me a comfortable account of you, and spoke of her poor little boy hopefully, as likely to outgrow at last the mischiefs that threatened his infancy. I trust it will be so; and may every cloud pass over him harmless! The Montagus talk of going to Brighton, where they will find her out if still there.

[1] This letter drew from Scott one of his happiest letters, not less interesting to-day than it was rich in wisdom for his correspondent: "Dread, my dear Lady Louisa, that in preferring some comely quarto to a shabby duodecimo your ladyship may be rejecting the *editio princeps*. Consider that in banishing some antiquated piece of polissonnerie you may destroy the very work for which the author lost his ears two centuries since. Then there are so many reasons for not parting with duplicates. . ."

[2] Refers to Scott's troubles resulting from the failure of his secret business.

You know perhaps that the hooping-cough in their family hindered their journey to Scotland, or rather delayed it, for I think they are likely to take it some weeks hence. When I asked Lord M. for a frank,[1] he bade me tell you he had been on the point of writing to you himself, but hearing of you very fully from the Drumlanrig-party, he put it off till another occasion.

Now to say honestly why the spirit moves me to plague you with a letter at present: that French *pirate* Galignani has gathered together in two small volumes your prefaces to the British novelists, and published them at Paris, whence some copies have been brought over hither. Every body who opens the book is charmed with it. To use the French expression *on se l'arrache*; and nobody that I have met with seems ever to have heard of the prefaces before, but all are eager to get it from France. Were it to be got in England at double or treble the price, they would send to the next book-seller, but they will not lay out a large sum for the *Gil Blas'*, *Clarissa's* and *Tom Joneses* they have by heart already. The whole collection can only be a library-book, furniture for a country house, like the Bibliothèque de Campagne. Surely it would answer to Ballantyne himself to publish the Prefaces apart, and if there were two more volumes added (or four if you will) it would run like wild-fire. Either Galignani has not printed all, or many are wanting whom you certainly do not mean to pass by: Moore's *Zeluco*, Godwin's *Caleb Williams* and *St. Leon*; Charlotte Smith, Miss Burney, Miss Hamilton, Miss Edgeworth, Miss Austen. And may I petition for a word in favour of Charlotte Lennox, Dr. Johnson's favourite, whose *Female Quixote* delighted my childhood so much that I cannot tell whether the liking I still have for it is from taste or memory. General Burgoyne took the plot and characters of his admired comedy *The Heiress* almost wholly from another novel of hers, *Henrietta*, and when he printed the play did not name her in the preface, which, considering he was a great man and she a starving authoress, I thought ungenerous.

A plea for women novelists

I am lately returned from a friend's house where these prefaces have been *devoured*, by man, woman, and child. One evening after they were finished, a book was wanting to be read aloud, and what you said of Mackenzie made the company chuse *The Man of Feeling*, though some apprehended it would prove too affecting. However

[1] *i.e.*, the privilege of free postage, enjoyed by M.P.'s, Government officials, etc., who sent so many of their friends' letters, enabling them to evade the high postal charges, that the system became a frank scandal. Abolished by the Penny Post.

we began: I, who was the reader, had not seen it for several years, the rest did not know it at all. I am afraid I perceived a sad change in it, or myself—which was worse; and the effect altogether failed. Nobody cried, and at some of the passages, the touches that I used to think so exquisite—Oh Dear! They laughed. I thought we should never have got over Harley's walking down to breakfast with his shoe-buckle in his hand. Yet I remember so well its first publication, my mother and sisters crying over it, dwelling upon it with rapture! And when I read it, as I was a girl of fourteen not yet versed in sentiment, I had a secret dread I should not cry enough to gain the credit of proper sensibility. This circumstance has led me to reflect on the alterations of taste produced by time. What we call the taste of the Age, in books as in anything else, naturally influences more or less those who belong to that Age, who converse with the world and are swayed by each other's opinions. But how comes it to affect those who are as yet of no Age, the very young, who go to an author fresh and, if one may say so, stand in the shoes of his first original readers? What instinct makes them judge so differently? In my youth Rousseau's *Nouvelle Heloise* was the book that all mothers prohibited and all daughters longed to read: therefore somehow or other they did read, and were not the better for it if they had a grain of romance in their composition. Well! I know a young person of very strong feelings—one "of imagination all compact," all eagerness and enthusiasm. She lately told me she had been trying to read the *Nouvelle Heloise*, but it tired and disgusted her, so she threw it by unfinished. I was heartily glad to hear it; but, I own, a good deal surprised, for if she, the same she, had lived fifty years ago, she would have been intoxicated and bewildered and cried her eyes out.

The test of tears

Now do consider and expound this; not in a letter to me, but in the next Waverley-novel, or Preface, or Review. It is a theme well worth your handling as a curious trait in Human nature; and I should very much like to see how you would account for it. *Remember no answer is required.* I only venture to write upon that condition; otherwise I should abstain, as your eyes are far too precious to be worn and wasted in correspondence.—Believe me always, with the warmest good wishes, most truly yours,

L. STUART.*

From the same GLOUCESTER PLACE,
July 1st, 1827.

DEAR SIR WALTER,—I know not how to thank you enough for your present, which I received on Friday afternoon, and *fell to* without a moment's delay. I have finished the first volume.[1] What others think of it, I am entirely ignorant ; and I feel it almost an impertinence to give my own opinion upon such a work. But this I can truly say, I have read it with just the same avidity as I ever did any of your novels, and I think enjoyed it much the more, instead of the less, from knowing, from having in a manner witnessed, the events it records. We do not see distinctly what is too near our eye, or judge calmly of things while they are actually passing before us. Various reports, different versions of every story, let alone party disputes, tend to confuse the mind and leave it in a sort of uncertainty. It is, therefore, most agreeable (I speak for myself) to see the intricate road one has actually travelled laid down in a good map, to have a fair clear candid luminous statement of the momentous scenes that, when present, only bewildered one's faculties. And if ever I met with a statement deserving these epithets, I protest it is yours. If ever I beheld the causes leading to the French Revolution traced with a masterly hand, it is in your first and second chapters ; where you have steered quite clear of the rock on which I had some fear of your splitting —*i.e.*, too partial a regard for Aristocracy, and so expressed yourself, that I shall wonder if even a real Whig can find fault, 'though a Radical may like your sentiments all the worse for being both moderate and just. I also admire particularly the description of the National Assembly and that of our House of Commons in the 4th Chapter ; and throughout am delighted with those flashes of poetical genius which by one happy illusion, sometimes only one word, light up a compleat image in the mind ; and what is more, illumine the subject, render it better understood. I am going too far, and deserve you should recollect Dr. Johnson's speech to a blue-stocking lady— " Consider what your flattery is worth, Madam, before you choke *me* with it." But I affront myself by naming flattery, for I never flattered any body in my life, and 'though I may judge mistakenly I do it honestly, and this naïve remark of a young friend who chanced to be with me Friday Evening, and to whom I read some of these passages, will prove : " Why, Lord ! you read it as if you

Scott's political moderation

[1] Refers to Scott's *Life of Napoleon.*

had written it yourself "—she meant *con amore*, and indeed I believe it was true.

You have made a mistake in calling the Emperor Francis Leopold's *brother* instead of his *son;* and have followed false information in your note, page 327, which you may think no great matter. But I can tell you it will serve to ascertain one point. Depend upon it, no ghost ever does, or did, or will walk, if poor Lord Sheffield's has not paid you a fearful visit by this time. *He*, as Colonel Holroyd, was the person who said to Lord George Gordon he would stab or shoot him on the first entrance of the mob into the House of Commons; and further, threatened to tear the blue cockade out of his hat, unless he put it instantly in his pocket, which Lord George, quailing, submitted to. Colonel Holroyd's fencible cavalry was one of the regiments whose coming up saved the town, and for his activity at its head Lord North made him an Irish peer. In his last years, when I knew him, these matters had grown exactly: "His Sacred Majesty's disjune at the Tower of Tillietudlem"—and put all his friends to flight in the same manner. Whenever we saw the riots of 1780 impending, one person slipped out of the room, another spied a thundercloud in the sky, another even asked questions about his own pamphlets on the Corn-laws: nothing would do. As his newest acquaintance I was a favourite victim. In vain did I plead that I was grown up and in London at the time, and had had too hearty a fright to forget a single circumstance, our house being on the condemned list. No matter, I must read the old newspapers and magazines treasured up in his library because containing the most accurate accounts of all that passed. For Cosmo Gordon—no *General*, nor, I believe, ever an M.P.; I remember no person (of a gentleman) so generally despised in society (or rather out of it) for a strong suspicion that much dirty scandal in the "Morning Post" about the Duchess of Gordon, Lord William, and others of his own connections, came from him—sent him altogether to Coventry, whence he never returned.

Recalls Colonel Holroyd

I am afraid you will begin to think Lord Sheffield dropped his mantle on my shoulders when he left this world, yet I cannot help retailing an old story he was fond of telling, it seems so *pat* to what is going forward in the world at present, to Mr. Brougham's high opinion of Lord Eldon, and twenty other things happening, now that people are every day eating up their words "with *any* sauce that can be devised." Oh! How I wish I could hear you for half an hour on these points.

Well! The old gentleman said he was a youth on his travels, Ensign Holroyd, when Wilkes came to Geneva during his outlawry. All the young men there were fond of his company as a remarkable person and a man of wit, and *he* made up to him still more than the rest—of course was in his favour. One day he took the liberty of saying to him: "Mr. Wilkes, may I ask you what gave you such a hatred of Lord Bute?"—"I a hatred of him," returned Wilkes very coolly, "Nobody could hate him less. I am sure he was always very civil to me; and for that matter I protest I thought him a very good Minister." "You!!! *You* thought him so?"—"Aye, Why should not I?"—"Good God! Why did you attack him so violently then?"—"Why," repeated Wilkes turning round and staring—"Why, because it was my *game*, to be sure: I wanted to be somebody, and as matters stood, I had not much chance of getting any thing from government, so you know my business was to attack it."—"And had you no scruple of throwing the whole kingdom into confusion?"—Wilkes squinted at him with a look of fun: "Why, if I *had* had such a scruple, I should not have been *John Wilkes*, but a *va-a-ry vir-tu-ous* Holroyd." And so the conversation ended.

Wilkes' game

Will you remember me in the kindest manner to Mrs. Lockhart, it does me good to know you are now together and her little boy is in so fair a way of compleat recovery. I wish *she* would write to me and tell me all about you and herself, for I grudge your pen and ink being wasted, therefore do not desire any answer. I meant to have inclosed a note to her to this purpose, but the hour is too late to permit my writing it. I can only add that I am very truly yours,

L. STUART.*

From Lady Shelley

APSLEY HOUSE,[1]
Novr 8th [1827].

MY DEAR SIR WALTER,—Although as one of your obliged and happy guests at Abbotsford, where all were so kindly received, I should not venture to hope to be remembered by you. Still, writing

[1] Lady Shelley, a very distant connection of the poet, is writing from the Duke of Wellington's town house. Scott wrote to his son Walter on Aug. 1st, 1819: "I wish you had Sir J. S[helley] at your elbow when you are buying horses—he is a very knowing man on the turf. I like his lady very much. She is perfectly feminine in her manners, has good sense and plays divinely on the harp; besides all of which, she shoots wild boars, and is the boldest horsewoman I ever saw. I saw her at the Paris ride like a lapwing in the midst of all the aides-de-camp and suite of the Duke of Wellington."

from this House and associated I hope in your recollection with some agreeable days at Paris in the society of the object of our mutual enthusiasm, I trust I shall not be quite forgotten. I write in hopes of renewing thro' your good offices my acquaintance with your charming daughter who, since I have been ill and confined to the House by a fall from my horse for above two years, has become, I am told, an inhabitant of this unpoetical region instead of stepping *barefooted* across your Burns at Abbotsford. Were it not for the all engrossing ties she has formed, she would I think feel almost as much under painful restraint as I have done during my total confinement to bed and the sofa from having injured a nerve; but we have both discovered new sources of happiness, and mine now consists more than ever in the pleasures of social intercourse, which I have enjoyed in perfection at my bedside à la française owing to the unwearied kindness of my friends and particularly of the Duke [of Wellington] who thro' the whole of the last interesting Spring paid me almost daily visits and set so good an example that my *ruelle* [*de lit*] often rivalled the brilliant epoch of Paris. Now that I am better and able to receive on my sofa, I wish to enjoy the society of those whom memory represents as interesting, and amongst them the sweet Songstress cannot be forgotten. So pray ask her if she will come and see me and introduce her husband to me, and when you come to Town I shall depend upon your seeking me as an old Friend. My agreeable Edinburgh Cicerone, Mr. Wm. Clarke [*i.e.*, Clerk] proved alas faithless, and has never sought or he would have found me out. Like all strangers in this busy vortex, so many new objects of interest present themselves on all sides, that the absent are seldom sought; but it is not so with constant residents who find not only leisure to be good, but also to think of those who are associated with travelled recollections; and the Calton and Auld Reekie are never named without reminding me of the wild legends and interesting illustrations told by the friend of the great Unknown, in his own Romantic Town! How glad I am that Arlechino has been obliged to unmask, for I can now think of and tell with the pride of an ancient Belle that Sir Walter at Abbotsford said that the author of *Rob Roy* when describing the equestrian performance of Di Vernon must have seen Lady Shelley ride! *Ces beaux jours sont passés*, but the recollection is not less agreeable, and as I am become a Philosopher, like all my ilk are when chained down by illness, I will promise not to have my head turned if Sir Walter in *propria persona* confirm the probably long forgotten

The Duke of Wellington

compliment—or at all events if he will promise to come and seek me in Belgrave St. not five minutes walk from this house—the *new world* which Lord Grosvenor, not Mr. Canning, is calling into existence. It will, I think, please you to hear that your *Life* of Napoleon charmed away many of my hours of pain and anxiety last July, and was my first intellectual enjoyment after a very severe fever and condemnation to darkness and solitude brought on by mental inquietude. As Bacon says, and we daily feel, " the joys of Parents are secret, and so are their sorrows." Mine are now subduing, but your book first made me take a renewed interest in the affairs of the world ; and I thus far confide in you, knowing how highly you will prize such a result of your labours, tho' so indifferent to an Author's celebrity. I am staying here to escape the smell of paint, and as I have driven out now several times lying down in my carriage, I profit by being directly in the Park, and am enlivened by the occasional visits of the Duke to London. Adieu my dear Sir Walter. Pray write and tell me if you are coming to Town, and beg Mrs. Lockhart to call upon me.—Yours very faithfully,

F. SHELLEY.

I am sure you have not forgotten my broily husband, who joins in kindest regards.

From the same

GROSVENOR PLACE,
[1828].

DEAR SIR WALTER,—I am delighted to hear from your charming daughter that you are coming to Town ; and knowing how fêted you always are, I write to tell you that the Duke of Wellington dines with me quite *en habit comité* on Tuesday 1st of April ; therefore pray keep yourself disengaged and come and meet him. He is the only person I receive at dinner, as I cannot sit up long, and I know he will like to meet you ; I need not say how delighted I shall be, but I shall expect previous visits as I hope you will arrive by the 20th.

Lockhart the Lion

I am much pleased with your daughter's acquaintance and that of her husband who was not at all a surly Lion the night I saw him.—Yours very truly,

F. SHELLEY.[1]

[1] Scott, in his Diary for May 17, 1828, wrote : " Went to breakfast the second at Lady Shelleys, where there was a great morning party. A young lady begged a lock of my hair, which was not worth refusing. I stipulated for a kiss which I was permitted to take."

AN OPEN PAGE OF ONE OF THE LETTER-BOOKS, SHOWING A LETTER UNFOLDED, WITH THE BROKEN SEAL

Some of the more economical correspondents filled their paper and then wrote crosswise over the original script, as is partly done here. It will be noted that the postage, payable by the recipient, is 10½*d.* for the double quarto sheet. Most of the letters are endorsed by Scott, who has here written the name of the sender and date of writing. His endorsement on another letter is seen above.

From the Hon. Mrs. Cadogan

LEAMINGTON,
Decr. 20th [1830].

MY DEAR SIR WALTER,—I send you by Lady Ruthven a pair of Slippers that my daughters have work'd for you.[1] They are of a genuine Tartar Pattern, supposed to be copied from those worn by Ghazi Khan, and come down to some of his descendants in Poland from whom I got the pattern—it is that branch who, on becoming Christians, christen'd their sons Adam because they said Adam was a great Christian ; and you see one of their same Race now at the Head of the Provisional Government of Poland, who by-the-by is as dull a man as ever became a rebel. The only thing we did not admire at Abbotsford was a pair of ugly, uncomfortable-looking Slippers we saw in your study : so my daughters hope you will replace them by their's. They would have been better had the materials been got in London ; and you would have had them sooner had they been worth their Carriage by Coach. We hope they may last til we bring you some better ones next Autumn, for unless we go to Italy I do hope to go to Scotland : and I trust I may not pass within 50 miles of Abbotsford without your letting us make you a visit. In any case you have given us hopes of seeing you in London in the Spring. I shall try and make acquaintance with Mrs. Lockhart and by that means you will know where to find us.

Slippers, sorcery, and complexions

The French *diablerie* book we talk'd of, I cannot get in London (at least it has not been procured for me) ; but I dare say in Leicester Sqr. I may get it, when I shall find a pleasure in sending it to you. If you have not read *The Devil's Elixir* pray do—genuine German and very amusing. We came here for the Waters for Capt. Cadogan, with whom they disagree ; but my daughters, who were very well before, have benefited by them. It is good to clear the Decks for action ; and clear complexions are the best of Artillery for young ladies. We are going to Lord Westmoreland's in Northamptonshire to pass the Xmas. Most of the *outs* will be collected there, but in spite of their being out I dare say they will be merry enough.

The Duke [of Wellington] is grown fat, and Lord Grey thin. We have Hunt in Parliament ; and Stacks on fire—as yet the only good results of the change. But this is treason of me who, as a good wife, ought to be a good Whig.

[1] This pair of slippers made for Sir Walter, as gay and as comfortable-looking as the writer describes them, have now an honored place with the notable Scott collection in the drawing-room of Mr. Hugh Walpole's country house.

My daughters join with Mr. Cadogan in wishing you and your family a happy Xmas and a merry new year, and a great many of them—as we say in Ireland. Mr. C. desires me [to] ask you to think of him if, any time in the course of the coming year, you should hear of a learned man who would undertake the Classic education of our little Boy at Home. A mere Tutor is easily got; but we would like a person who would remain with us for some years in a sort of mix'd capacity of Librarian and *Savant*. There are many men of letters who, having no profession or family, might like passing their spare time in another's family, with the chances of travelling now and then and the power of following their own literary pursuits at the same time. If the knowledge of any thing of this sort comes in your way it will very much oblige us if you will think of our request. . .—I am most truly your obliged and affectionate,

H. Louisa Cadogan.

THE HEAD OF HIS CLAN

From the Duchess of Buccleuch .	Reply to the Ettrick Shepherd's request for a farm.
the 4th Duke of Buccleuch .	Agrees to guarantee £4,000 for Scott —Advises the rejection of Laureate-ship.
[*The same*] . . .	Byron's poem recalls a Cambridge story.
[*The same*] . . .	Punch for killing foxes—Care for his people—Scottish history.
[*The same*] . . .	His new library—Place of honour for Scott's portrait—Raeburn's shame-fully finished pictures.
the 5th Duke of Buccleuch .	Marriage of Scott's son—The old Presbyterian mother-in-law—No fancy for Cambridge's special wars —Fox-hunting.
[*The same*] . . .	His marriage to Lady Charlotte Thynne—Disappointed Dowagers.

" . . . God bless him ! His father and I loved each other well, and his beautiful mother had as much of the angel as is permitted to walk this earth. I see the balcony from which they welcomed poor Charlotte and me, long ere the ascent was surmounted, streaming out their white handkerchiefs from the battlements. There were *four* merry merry people that day—now one sad individual is all that remains. . ."

In this touching passage Sir Walter Scott recalled, in his Diary, the welcome given to his bride and himself by the 4th Duke and Duchess of Buccleuch. He loved the Duke, but—as Lockhart says —not as a Duke, but as the head of his clan, the representative of the old Knights of Branxholm, of deathless story. There are many pleasant pages in the *Life* of Scott testifying to the affectionate relations between the Sir Walter and that noble House ; whose 3rd Duke had assisted to secure the young Minstrel his Sheriffship and also his Clerkship of Session. But the peculiar intimacy of those relations is revealed in these lively letters. The first, as it happens chronologically, is from the beautiful Duchess, mentioned by Scott. James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, had written to her a queer letter. " It was never your Grace's money that I wanted," he said, " but the honour of your countenance." He went on to hint about a small farm belonging to the Duke, possessed by a mean fellow ; which had been divided, leaving a part unappropriated. And then this extraordinary comment, so like the Shepherd : " A single line, from a certain very great and very beautiful lady, to a certain Mr. Riddell, would ensure that small pendicle to the bard at once. But she will grant no such thing ! I appeal to your Grace if she is not a very bad lady that ? " Here is the Duchess's reply.

The second letter, from the Duke, shows him, incidentally, assisting Scott who had been hard put to it for ready money owing to the unsatisfactory state of affairs of his private printing and publishing business in the hands of the Ballantynes—a portent, had he but known it, of the coming disaster. But chiefly the letter is a reply to Scott's confidence on the delicate subject of rejecting

the Laureateship—and a very interesting commentary on the degradation into which the office had fallen, when held by Cibber, Whitehead, Pye, and others. Two more characteristic letters from the Duke, and then comes the final one, left unfinished. "Alas! alas!" laments Scott over his dead friend. A new hand takes up the pen with the last two letters, but the spirit is as hereditary as the title. The little group of letters, representing Sir Walter's affectionate friendship with three generations of Buccleuchs, ends to the echo of wedding-bells—and grumblings of disappointed Dowagers and speculating Mamas.

From the Duchess of Buccleuch

LANGHOLM LODGE,
March 18th, 1813.

I AM afraid you will think me and my correspondent, Mr. Hogg, very troublesome people, for I must confess that it is my fear of appearing some day in *print* which makes me beg of you to transmit my answers to him, in preference to writing to him myself. I enclose an excellent letter which I received from him, just before I left Dalkeith, and feeling much inclined to do him any kindness in my power, I begged the Duke to make enquiry of Major Riddell about this bit of Land, which seems in much request, for Mr. Hogg is not the first who has applied to me for it. This "mean fellow named Wilson," who does not seem to be a very popular character from the epithets bestowed upon him, has been in possession of this Farm for many years, and it certainly would be rather an act of injustice to turn him out, merely because others want his land. The Duke does not seem to know much about this Mr. Wilson, but he has not expressed any wish or intention of quitting the Farm.

I am really sorry to appear "a very bad lady" to the Ettrick Shepherd, for the House of Buccleuch is much disposed to cherish any plant that grows on the Braes of Ettrick and Yarrow. But he very justly observes that he is a difficult person to know how to serve. Will you, in your kindness, soften this disappointment as much as you can to the poor Bard, whose care for his aged Parents certainly made me feel particularly desirous to help him.[1]

Hogg—a difficult person

We proceed on our journey to London the end of next week. I know you will be glad to hear that the Duke and my children are well.—Believe me, very sincerely yours,

H. B. BUCCLEUCH &c.

[1] A farm was eventually bestowed, at a nominal rent, on the poet by the Duke of Buccleuch.

From Charles, fourth Duke of Buccleuch

DRUMLANRIG CASTLE,
August 28th, 1813.

My Dear Sir,—I received your letter of the 24th yesterday. I shall with pleasure comply with your request of guaranteeing the £.4000. You must, however, furnish me with *the form of a letter* to this effect, as I am completely ignorant of transactions of this nature.

I am never willing to *offer* advice, but when my opinion is asked by a friend I am ready to give it. As to the offer of H[is] R[oyal] H[ighness] to appoint you Laureate, I shall frankly say that I should be mortified to see you hold a situation which, by the general concurrence of the world, is stamped ridiculous. There is no good reason why it should be so ; but so it is. *Walter Scott, Poet Laureate,* ceases to be Walter Scott of *The Lay, Marmion,* &c. Any future Poem of yours would not come forward with the same probability of a successful reception as those of a former day. The Poet Laureate would stick to you and your productions like a Piece of *Court Plaister.* Your muse has hitherto been independent—do not put her into harness. We know how lightly she trots along when left to her natural paces, but do not try driving. I would write frankly and openly to H.R.H., but with respectful gratitude, for he *has* paid you a compliment. I would not fear to state that you had hitherto written when in Poetic mood, and feared to trammel yourself with a fixed periodical exertion ; and I cannot but conceive that H.R.H. who has much taste, will at once see the many objections which you *must* have to his proposal, but which you *cannot* write. Only think of being chaunted and recitatived by a parcel of hoarse and squeaking choristers in the Ante-room to the Drawing room on a birthday, for the edification of the Bishops, Pages, Maids of Honour, and Gentlemen-Pensioners ! Oh, horrible, thrice horrible ! Yours sincerely,

Refusing the Laureateship

Buccleuch.*

From the same

BOWHILL,
Decr. 13th, 1816.

My Dear Sir,—I have received your letter of the 11th. You know, I am sure, the interest I take in every thing that concerns your wishes, and your welfare. . . I have just read Lord Byron's last publication. I have no doubt that it is immensely fine, only unluckily for me there is [a] great part that conveys to my mind no one idea. I was a little diverted with the close connection of

the words Stael and *Leman* in his address to the Lake Geneva.[1] The Poem on Darkness is a mighty strange one. It is a dream, and not a dream. But I strongly suspect it is nonsense. I was vastly amused with the two surviving gentlemen who stare at one another till they drop down dead. I think it beats the story of the Kilkenny Cats. It puts me in mind of a Cambridge joke. A certain Mr. Whitmore, a Tutor at St. John's, was supposed to be the ugliest man going. This Revd. Divine was addicted to riding—an art in which he did not shine. He was generally deep in some problem, and left his horse to its own discretion. Unluckily, one day his reveries were disturbed by his horse pitching head over ears, and sending the Cavalier in a similar direction. Up started the Divine in great wrath, caught the horse by both ears, and stared the poor animal in the face till he actually dropt down dead. However, Mr. Whitmore was more fortunate than Lord Byron's gentlemen, for he survived the stare. I am afraid these observations will give you a mean opinion of my taste. These Poems are certainly very unlike your own, at all events.—Yours sincerely,

BUCCLEUCH.

From the same

BOWHILL,
Dec. 19th, 1816.

MY DEAR SIR,—. . . I have found out a remedy for my cough at night, which was very troublesome. I, immediately before going to bed, smoke a cigar. I do not know what put this idea into my head; but true it is, that, from the first trial I have slept the whole night through without coughing. We have killed no less than three foxes in 2 days lately. The rule is that when a Fox is killed I give a guinea's worth of Punch to the beaters. They had not regularly availed themselves of this, so that there was an arrear of 4 guineas which was converted into Punch last night, and partaken of by above 60 people in the new washhouse. These little enjoyments put people into good humour.

Punch for killing foxes

A very handsome subscription has been made in the town and neighbourhood of Selkirk for the support of really indigent people. I understand it is ample for its purpose. I am carrying on my works here with great rapidity in consequence of the many persons out of employment who are employed as extras. When the snow permits I plant, cut drains, and excavate the pond near the house, which is to be a large pond. When it freezes I fill the Ice house,

[1] *i.e.*, the "Sonnet to Lake Leman" in *The Prisoner of Chillon* (1816).

draw cut wood together, split billets, etc. and thus I trust we shall get well through the winter.

The books you mentioned having sent (the *Tales of My Landlord*) have never arrived. We had a copy from Manners and Miller. The first *Tale of the Black Dwarf* is very entertaining, and is a good Border story. The second is not only very amusing but highly interesting, as it throws a light on a particular part of history not generally well understood. Certainly not by me. Just before this work came out, it accidentally occurred to me to ask you where I should find the best account of the Covenanters etc. You will do me the justice to admit that, I have never availed myself of my intimacy with you to spy into any of your intended publications. But I am going to depart from that rule in the present instance. I am very ill-read in the history of Scotland, which I am ashamed of. I should much wish therefore to know when your rumoured work is likely to appear upon that subject. If soon, I shall defer commencing my studies.—Yours sincerely,

BUCCLEUCH.

P.S.—I shall like much to have a copy of Charles Sharpe's intended work. He is a curious fellow, and I have no doubt the work will be entertaining.

From the same

PORTSMOUTH,
Febry 15th, 1819.

MY DEAR SIR,—A few hours since, I wrote you a hurried scrawl stating that we were in the act of going on board. The Boats indeed were waiting for us. *Tout cela est changé*, and we are *not* going on board. The wind says, *No!* Well to return to my subject. Some considerable time since, you consented to sit to Raeburn for your picture for me. I now call upon you for the fulfilment of your promise, more particularly as you will probably soon set out for London. My prodigious undertaking of building a West Wing to be added to the body of Bowhill is already begun. A Library is to be added to the present drawing room of 41 ft. by 21 ft., and 14 ditto. high. A space for one picture is reserved over the chimney piece. In this warm situation I intend to place the Guardian of Literature. The length of the picture should be what is called (I believe) 3 quarters. If higher than that, it would have an awkward appearance. As mentioned in my letter of this morning, I shall be happy to have my friend Maida appear. It is now almost proverbial "Walter Scott, and his Dog." Raeburn

should be warned that I will not take a *half*-finished picture off his hands. Many of his works are shamefully finished. The face is studied, but everything else is neglected. Now I know the shape of my friends' hands and arms as well as their noses. Vandyck (or -dyke) as we now write it, was of my opinion. Besides, Raeburn has really a fair opportunity of producing something worthy of his skill and talents, as he will have an opportunity of exhibiting his picture long before its situation will be ready for its reception. The lights will be *en face*—viz. three windows. I think this addition will add much to our comforts and convenience. It gives *me* a bed room, dressing room (which I shall only use as a repository for Guns and fishing tackle), a sitting room, and a servants room, all connecting. The sitting room connects with the Library by a sham book door. *When* I add the last Wing I shall have an

A warning to Raeburn

[The letter was never finished, for the ailing Duke passed away shortly after. It is endorsed by Scott :—The last letter I received from my dear friend, the Duke of Buccleuch. Alas ! Alas !]

From Walter, fifth Duke of Buccleuch

CHELTENHAM,
Feb. 15th, [1825].

My Dear Sir Walter,—I am afraid that you have been expecting to hear from me for sometime, but the truth is that I only received your letter this morning, in consequence of its having been directed to Cambridge. Lord Montagu, a few days ago, mentioned in his letter that you had written to me there, and Mr. Blakeney immediately wrote to Cambridge to have it forwarded to this place ; where I have just received it. I beg that you and your family will accept my most sincere congratulations on your son's marriage, which I trust will prove as happy to all parties concerned as it promises to be, and I hope that the old Presbyterian Lady [1] herself has relaxed her stays on the occasion. Upon the whole I should think the opposition must have rather heightened the zest of the matter. I hope you treated her with an Epithalamium suited to the occasion.

I go to Cambridge after Easter : in the mean time I am residing here with Mr. Blakeney, who is taking great pains to make me a mathematician and an algebraist, as they deal a good deal in those wares at that Learned University. I cannot say that I have much

[1] Young Walter's mother-in-law. It was a love-match. But " the only impediment," wrote Sir Walter to Lady Davy, " has been the poor mother, who could not brook parting with the sole object of her care and attention, to resign her to the vicissitudes of a military life." The bride's fortune was a handsome one, and in the marriage settlement Scott settled Abbotsford upon the pair.

fancy for these studies, and I think that Euclid and Bonycastle ought to have [been] burnt long ago on Berwick law. I heard from Lady Montague this morning : the Duchess has been unwell, but is getting better. John [1] is going to a private Tutor in Leicestershire, where he is to be well looked after, and to learn everything but fox-hunting, which is the besetting sin in that part of the world. He has taken a high degree at Eton in the Arts of Fun and Mischief. I hope he will prosper in this new situation, but I have some fears, as he has no companion but his private Tutor. Mr. Blakeney joins in kindest remembrances to you, and we both hope you will one day visit us at Cambridge.—I remain, yours ever sincerely,

BUCCLEUCH.

From the same

FROME,
July 28, 1829.

MY DEAR SIR WALTER,—I should not have delayed so long writing to you, had I not been confined to bed by a severe sprained ancle, in spraining which I dislocated one of the bones of my foot—now quite well.

I have the pleasure of telling you of my intended marriage with Lady Charlotte Thynne a daughter of Lord Bath. As you must be unacquainted with her and her merits, I will only say that my Family are perfectly satisfied with, and highly approve of, my choice. A good many old Dowagers and Speculating Mamas are furious, and one or two of them cannot conceal their ill humour.

I have so many letters to write that I hope you will excuse this very short one to you, who as one of my oldest and best Friends ought to have received a more detailed account from me. I shall not see you again in my present state of single man, as I am to be married very soon ; and I hope to be in Scotland about the middle of September.—I remain, My dear Sir Walter, Yours ever most sincerely,

BUCCLEUCH.

[1] The Duke's brother.

TRANS-ATLANTIC LIFE AND LETTERS

Adventures of Scottish settlers in Canada—Towns springing up in the Wilds—Cure for seasickness—Annoyance with Scott's anonymity—Leslie's portrait and its admirers—American hustle with the Waverley Novels—Complaint against English adventurers—Scott urged to visit the United States—Criticism of Fenimore Cooper—A Bill to secure Sir Walter's copyrights—Fenimore Cooper's apology and advice.

TRANS-ATLANTIC LIFE AND LETTERS

It was at the dawn of Scott's boyhood, when he was already listening to tales of chivalry, that the tea was upset in Boston Harbour, and with it an imperial dream. As he turned from Tales of the Border to writing first his Ballads of them, and then his Novels, America was becoming another great English-speaking nation. It is rather surprising, in view of the enormous popularity of his novels across the Atlantic, that he had not more American correspondents. The contact was more personal, for in the streams of admirers to Abbotsford were the first of those annual invaders from the United States who reveal Shakespeare to us, discover old England, and bear away in triumph such hoards of our literary treasures and antiques—not to mention other objects of undoubted curiosity if less venerable. And here one touches on a subject which has caused a regrettable misunderstanding.

In Andrew Lang's biography of Lockhart—which for all its admirable qualities falls short of the portraiture Scott's biographer deserved—there is this criticism: "One other point in the *Life* of Scott may be regretted. Lockhart published certain passages of Sir Walter's Journal which reflected on the manners of some Americans with whom he was acquainted." Both Lockhart and Lang are here inaccurate. Scott did not write in his Diary of the "manners" of Americans, but of the "manner"—which is another thing. Again, Scott did not jot down this impression as applying to some Americans with whom he was acquainted: Scott was writing of Fenimore Cooper, and proceeded to make his reference general. Finally, it should be pointed out that the longest passage in the *Life* of Scott referring to the intrusiveness of some American tourists is from the reminiscences of Lockhart—not from the Diary of Sir Walter, who even in that instance regretted, after summarily dismissing his visitors, that the lion-hunters were not bidden to stay for dinner. Fenimore Cooper was very angry when Lockhart's *Life* of Scott appeared, and wrote of the "vulgar minds" of Sir Walter and his biographer. But the one criticism apart, Scott's references to Cooper were kindly, and acknowledged the genius of

the American author, whose own biographer candidly admits that Cooper's self-assertion often bordered, or seemed to border, on arrogance. Unfortunately, the remark about Fenimore Cooper (which, on his own admission, was due to his unresponsiveness to Scott's courtesies) was also taken to heart by some of his countrymen, who perhaps failed to appreciate that Scott's Diary entry was made by a man in the darkest year of his griefs and disasters, who had been long-suffering with tourists and importuning correspondents—like the New York girl whose MS. of her play—*The Cherokee Lovers*—sent unbidden for Scott's opinion, cost him £5 in postage ; a sum he had to pay again when a duplicate copy arrived lest the first should be "lost in the boisterous seas." In 1897 Lang hoped that the tomahawk was buried. That hope is now a certainty ; and the picturesque weapon would not have been exhibited even as a curio had not Lang repeated Lockhart's error in quoting Scott, and were it not for the letters now reproduced. But even were it necessary to defend the author from a charge of prejudice, there is sufficient evidence to outweigh this single comment of the generous and sympathetic man who only a few days earlier had written : "After all, one must deprecate whatever keeps up ill-will betwixt America and the mother country."

On the other side it is justice to Cooper to acknowledge his anxiety that Scott should receive some remuneration other than a mere nominal amount for the thousands upon thousands of copies of his books pirated in the United States. Scott suffered more than any author of his time or since from the injustice of her copyright laws. Nevertheless, his wish that the low prices of his works there should not be altered is an interesting sidelight on the man. Commenting on the plan of Cooper to publish in the U.S.A. by entering each book as the property of an American Citizen, he wrote : "I must, however, take care not to give such a monopoly as to prevent the American public from receiving the works at the prices they are accustomed to." Cooper's plan never materialised ; nor—from causes that still unfortunately operate at Westminster and Washington—did the proposal, which we learn of here for the first time, for a Bill to secure to Scott the copyrights of all his books in the United States. It is an ironic commentary that a hundred years later finds something of the old injustice remaining. Since most Americans to-day agree in condemning their Government's policy of being the only nation outside the Berne Convention for universal copyrights, it would be a timely act of grace for the United States to

celebrate the Sir Walter Scott Centenary of 1932 by coming into line with nearly the rest of the world.

For the rest, McDermid's letter with its simple tale of a Canadian settler's adventure ; the next, with its stirring picture of a dawning nation ; then the early example of American enterprise in rushing the Waverley Novels all over the States ; the piquant invitation to Scott to visit America to give that abused country a " boost "—these are the minutiæ for the mosaic of history, which is ever sad stuff when lacking contemporary illustration.

From John McDermid

GREMISTER,
14th Feby. 1822.

DEAR SIR WALTER,—. . . About five years ago a family of the name of McDougald (I believe) emigrated from Lochawe-side to Canada, and settled upon the Banks of one of the rivers that fall into the St. Lawrence. In the course of time they became possessed of a few Cows which generally pastured in the woods behind the settlement. It happened one day that the Cows did not return at the usual time, and their mistress went to the wood to look for them. After searching a long time in vain she thought it time to return, but in her anxiety for the Cows she had neglected to mark the way she had come and discovered with horror that she had not the least idea of the direction in which her house lay. Instead of making any effort she sat down to bewail her misfortune, but had not remained many minutes in that situation when she was accosted by an Indian who, finding she did not understand him, made signs to her to follow him, which she did lest worse might befall her. They had not travelled far when they came to the Indian's Huts—or rather cave, and the Wanderer was ordered to enter. This, however, she ventured to refuse, when the Indian called to his Wife to come forth, which she instantly did, and, by every token of kindness she could display, endeavoured to induce the stranger to enter the Hut, which she at last agreed to do. She had no sooner seated herself than they placed a part of whatever the Hut could afford before her, and tried as well as they could to dissipate her fears. The worst, however, was to come, for night was now drawing nigh, and what was then to become of her. But as she was entirely at their mercy she said nothing until the Indian, having prepared a bed in a corner of the Hut made signs to her to lay down. She then became desperate, and positively refused to obey him. His Wife was then

A settler's adventure

ordered to lay down ; and the poor Wanderer, thinking it better to lay down with her hostess than sit up with her host, at last obeyed the signs he was still making to her. He then made another bed for himself, and the night passed away quietly. As soon as daylight appeared the unfortunate Highlander wanted to be off, but her entertainers would not permit her to move until she had partaken of their venison and whatever else they had for breakfast. After Breakfast the whole party set out in quest of the Cows which they soon found, and in a little time arrived at McDougald's Loghouse, to the unspeakable joy of him and his Wife who never expected to have met again in this world. McDougald, in return for the Indian's kindness, presented him with a suit of clothes with which he seemed highly delighted, and after making signs to McDougald to follow him to the Wood, but to which the cautious Highlander would not agree, he and his wife departed. Next day he made his appearance again, and was very anxious that his Friend would follow him. But still McD. distrusted. At last the Indian seized a child that lay sleeping in a cradle and made for the Wood : the Parents almost distracted made after him. The Robber, however, contrived to keep just arm's length before them to the verge of a beautiful Plain, surrounded on all sides by the Wood. Here he stopped and delivered them their child, making signs to McD. that this was the proper place for him to settle upon : to which the other assented, and immediately set about removing his Family and Stock to this little paradise, where he now lives in ease and comfort, while his Indian Neighbours watch his Interests night and day. To you, Sir, who can appreciate the amiable traits of character which this Poor Indian Family displayed, it will not be necessary to make any apology [for this letter]. The facts are taken from a Letter written by McDougald to a Friend of his in Argyleshire, about Eighteen months ago.—Your very obed Servt.

Led to a paradise

JOHN MCDERMID.

From an American Correspondent to Maria Edgeworth [1]

CHARLIESHOPE,
May 21st, 1823.

MY DEAR MADAM,—. . . Dr. Walsh has frequently urged me to invite you over. I fear that I have failed in convincing you of the vast benefits that would accrue to both countries if you were to pay us a visit. . . To people who are accustomed to view every thing in a proper light we would be great curiosities. I see the

[1] Forwarded by her to Sir Walter.

difference between ourselves and foreigners, and I know how difficult it is to represent us properly. If you could transport yourself to some of our Wilds, back about thirty years, and see the commencement of life there—if you could see the first clearing of a spot of ground, and see the log huts that are quickly built to shelter the first settlers from the weather, if you could fancy to yourself that there were no Mills, no schools, no churches, no merchandize, no buying or selling—if, I say, you could imagine such a cheerless, forlorn situation, and this (to all appearance) to continue for years and years, for such has been the case heretofore in all European countries, how you would be astonished to visit these very beginnings at this present moment. There are actually populous flourishing towns where 30 years ago some few hardy Yankees slept for weeks in their covered waggons until the trees were felled and a hut built—not shabby ill-contrived towns, such as you describe the Town of Clonbroney to be, but Towns where one Bank cannot discount notes fast enough for the Trade, where clergymen get from 1,000 to 1,200 dollars a year, where an academy has already proved too small for the wants of the people, where brassfounders make a handsome living, where even—what never happens in Europe under a century—Musical instrument-makers vie with their brethren in cities in the beauty and excellence of their workmanship. But I cannot convey any accurate idea of the rapid march that we are making. We are accused of egregious vanity, but in anticipating our future destiny *you* would not call us vain were you to see our roads, our canals, our Churches, and—in short—you would say that never did people deserve more and receive less consideration abroad than the Americans. The simplicity of the machinery that keeps us all in order is the most curious part of our history and that alone is worthy of the attention of an enlightened mind. Do not fear sea sickness—a few drops of oil of Turpentine once in a day or two will give tone to the stomach, and this, with previous precaution of emptying the biliary ducts of any redundancy of bile, will give you perfect health during the voyage.

The very rapid march

As to Sir Walter Scott, we are getting out of the heroicks about him. If he be *not* the author of the novels—I dare not say what will be said of him, if he *be*, then why this squeamishness, or rather why even lead us astray. In the new novel which is just at the moment reprinting here, the author wishes it to be distinctly understood that Walter Scott is not the author. This, although we might take it for mere badinage, has made a majority take up the

idea, again, of Dr. Greenfield. The opinion now is that Dr. Greenfield, knowing how very unpopular his name is, would not venture to risk himself before an indignant publick; that he has bribed Walter Scott so highly to give countenance to the supposition of his being the author, that honorable scruples have given way, that there can now be no certainty of ever knowing the name of the real author for, presuming it to be Dr. Greenfield, he must know that the reputation of the novels would fall immediately, never to be raised, if he were known to be the author. I feel this disagreeable sentiment creeping over me, liberal as I think I am, and I am obliged to plunge into the very *Heart of Midlothian*, follow the Antiquary to Mucklebackit's cabin and weep over " little Harry Bertram " with poor Domine before I can forget the stain that rests on the fair name of Dr. Greenfield, the now reputed author. There is a story current that Mrs. Grant, author of *Letters from the Mountains*, has written to a friend of hers in Philadelphia to say that Walter Scott declared to her *positively* that he was the author of the Waverley Novels. I hope that it may prove true. You are in the habit, no doubt, of writing to him, pray tell him how much his reputation is suffering in this country. We take these things in right good earnest, and having exalted Sir Walter Scott very high in our esteem we find it painful to " Whistle him down the winds." It is not a girlish curiosity that prompts us to know the author, and while Scott alone was pointed at, we would very well bear the amusing suspense, because, unlike Junius, the mystery injured no one, but let there be a bare possibility of Dr. Greenfield, and the whole charm is lost. I am confident we could not endure another volume. [conclusion not sent.]

Scott bribed!

From George Ticknor [1]

BOSTON, U.S.A.,
April 20, 1825.

My Dear Sir,—I would gladly thank you, as becomes your kindness, in sitting to Mr. Leslie for your portrait at my request, but I hardly know how to do it. You had so much more trouble about it than I had foreseen that I feel as if I ought to send you an apology of no common sincerity for my unreasonable wish, and as if I needed some act of pardon and amnesty in return. Indeed, if I had known

[1] Professor of Modern Literature at Harvard University; and a visitor to Abbotsford. He had given a commission for a portrait—at any cost—of the novelist, " whose many admirers in this country have some claim to a good likeness of him." The portrait, a half-length by C. R. Leslie, R.A., was considered by Scott's daughter Sophia as the best extant.

at what an expense of your time it was to be accomplished, I do not believe I should have had the courage to ask you for it; yet, and now it is all over, I can only rejoice that such a portrait of you is in my country. As a mere work of Art, it has uncommon merit. Allston [1] admires it exceedingly, and we can have no higher authority here when we have had his. He thinks it the best work of Leslie he has yet seen, and rejoices in it constantly as a new proof of the development of his delightful talents. As a portrait, too, none who have had the pleasure of seeing you can doubt its success; and to those like myself, who may not hope to see you again, it is beyond all price. Certainly, out of Great Britain I do not think a portrait of you could have been bestowed where it would be more valued, or give more pleasure, than in this community. We have been obliged to keep a sort of open house since you have thus been our guest, and my library has been changed into a publick exhibition room, to which not only all my friends, but those whom I do not know, have access almost without the formality of leave-asking. You cannot know how much your works are read in this country and therefore you cannot easily understand how wide and strong the curiosity is to see your portrait. Sometimes the room has seemed quite full, and the crowd still continues to come and go without our knowledge, so general is the desire to see it. When I thank you for it, therefore, which I do with all my heart, it is not only on my own account, but on account of my friends and of this whole community.

Open house for the curious

Do you receive from our publishers the numerous editions of your works which are constantly printing in this country? If you do not, I pray you to let me know it, for it would give me great pleasure to supply any deficiencies of this sort in the Library at Abbotsford. In truth, it is not to the credit of my country that you should be without American Editions of your own works; while at the same time, on your part, this involuntary homage from the speculations of our printers and booksellers could never be mistaken for flattery. Let me know then, I pray you, what you possess, that I may send you the remainder. If they serve no other purpose, they may, at least, show you, that I am not forgetful of your kindness to me. . .—Yours very faithfully,

GEO. TICKNOR.

[1] *i.e.*, Washington Allston, a painter, who came to London to study at the Royal Academy. On his return to the U.S.A. he became known as the American Titian.

From an American Correspondent to Miss Edgeworth

PHILADELPHIA,
June 20, 1826.

I AM rejoiced to learn that the reports about your great and good friend Sir Walter are much exaggerated. His last work *Woodstock* has met the most brilliant reception among us, and I regret that the large profits of his American publishers cannot be divided with this inimitable writer. As the circumstances attending the publication of this work are somewhat remarkable, I will mention them. Messrs. Carey & Lea purchased the printed sheets from the English publishers for £150, and they were sent over to them as fast as they were printed and before they were bound. They were reprinted here, bound and distributed in most of our principal cities three weeks *before* a complete English copy arrived in this country. The sheets for the last volume arrived in triplicate on board three different ships which came into N. York on the same day and within a few hours of one another. They were sent to this city by express, and within 23½ [hours] after their receipt, they were printed, folded, bound, and for sale. There were 185 persons employed in the various parts of this expeditious business. The public were as equally prompt in purchasing as the enterprising booksellers were in publishing. The work was for sale at 10 o'clock on Saturday morning, and in the evening of the same day there were short of 1100 copies left on hand. The edition consisted of 9000 copies.[1] Messrs. Carey & Lea contemplate publishing another edition of 3 or 4000 copies. There will be editions published in Boston, New York, and other cities in a short time. We have a great advantage over you in the cheapness of books in this country. *Woodstock*, for example, was published in England in 3 vols. and sold for 31 shillings (7½ Dollars); it was republished here in 2 vols. and sold for 1½ Dolls. or 6/9*d*. Most books are published at the same economical rate, and few persons are so poor as to be unable to purchase as many as they desire to read. [conclusion not sent.]

A Waverley hustle

From Daniel Winne

NEW YORK,
August 28, 1826.

SIR,—I am sensible I ought to apologize for this freedom, but I trust you will pardon the liberty which I have taken when I explain

[1] A reprinted edition of 9,000 should have been worth about £1,000 to Scott, not to mention the editions published in other cities. What he actually received was a fraction of the £150 for the first English sheets from which the reprints were done; and this fractional sum would be included in the contract price paid to Scott by his English publisher for the whole rights in the first edition. Frequently American publishers did not even buy English sheets of a book and still issued reprints—in which case the poor author, like the poor dog, had nothing. The English price of *Woodstock* was £1 11*s*. 6*d*.

the motives which have actuated me in addressing you. Among the thousands of Europeans who annually resort to our shores, the English are by far the most numerous and the least respectable. With but very few exceptions, the better classes are mere professional or commercial adventurers, who repair to America with a hope of retrieving their desperate fortunes; and, not finding the "El dorado" which their imaginations had pictured, endeavor to console themselves for their disappointments by an indiscriminate abuse of the country and its institutions. These aspersions, have, I fear, tended in no slight degree to deter the educated and enlightened English from visiting our country—a country in praise of which no more need be said than whatever is excellent in morals or legislation has been derived from England. True it is *les bienséances* are not observed with that scrupulous exactness which the artificial distinctions of society in Europe imperiously demand, and our Southern frontiers may occasionally exhibit scenes of violence and disorder. It would, however, be the height of injustice to reproach the inhabitants of the Atlantic States with the excesses of a few backwoodsmen in Kentucky or Missouri. With equal justice might *we* charge the sober inhabitants of Edinburgh or London with the horrible atrocities of the miserable Irish in the wilds of Connaught or Munster.

Unwanted "El Dorado" seekers

There is one individual in Great Britain who might effectually remove the prejudices which still remain in the minds of the higher classes in England: need I name the Author of *Marmion* and *Ivanhoe*, a name which serves to awaken in the breast of an American every feeling of admiration and respect. Nothing, I am persuaded, would so highly gratify the people of this country as [a] visit from the illustrious personage alluded to, and nowhere would he receive more sincere and enthusiastic demonstrations of regard.[1]

Although our country possesses no remains of the power and grandeur of other ages to tempt the antiquary to our shores, the gratifying picture of national and individual happiness which he would here behold would amply compensate for the trifling fatigues incident to a voyage across the Atlantic. Many of the incidents in the history of our early settlements are highly susceptible of poetical embellishment, as the beautiful poem of Mr. Campbell, notwithstanding its strange incongruities and anachronisms, sufficiently

[1] Scott never undertook the visit. The time was not yet when the successful English author must needs talk of his books to zealous—and often long-suffering—audiences in America.

evinces. The character of the six nations, a miserable remnant of which still exists in our State, their undaunted courage, their fortitude which no extremity of pain or suffering could subdue, their romantic generosity and fidelity, worthy of the days of Bayard, would furnish materials, which, in the hands of a great master, would be infinitely more attractive than the worn-out and hacknied subjects which form the staple of almost every work of fiction of the present day. Cooper, one of our successful novelists, has introduced into his last work some fine traits of Indian character, although his knowledge of Savage life is extremely limited. Many of his Oneidas talk like sentimental men milleners who have assumed the language and costume of these stern " Romans of the west," and bear the same resemblance to the original Iroquois that Sir Wm. Curtis, arrayed in " the garb of old Gaul," does to the sturdy Celt of the days of Montrose and Dundee.[1]

Fenimore Cooper's travesties

Throughout this extensive country, from the confines of Canada to the most solitary plantation house on the Colorado, the Waverley novels are read with equal delight, and the appearance of a new work by the same author creates a sensation in the reading world altogether unexampled in our literary history.

A gentleman from this State of distinguished talents and acquirements, and a member of the national Legislature, intends to bring in a Bill the next Congress to secure to the author of those inimitable productions the copyright of all his works in this country. Of the success of the Bill I have not the slightest doubt, as the proposal met with the warm approbation of those with whom he consulted during the last session ; and had not the insufferably tedious debates on the Panama question rendered it impossible to attend to any other business before the House, the Bill would have been introduced and passed. Our orators at Washington display more anxiety about the length than the quality of their speeches, and it is not unusual for a Western Demosthenes to occupy the floor of Congress for three or four successive days on what he may deem an important question. We have not the same effectual means of silencing a bore as you have at St. Stephens : would that we had, as much valuable time might be saved which is now consumed in frivolous debates.

[1] Refers to one of the jokes of the day—the appearance of Sir Wm. Curtis (an ex-Lord Mayor of London, and M.P. for that city) in the Highland philabeg, in imitation of his Sovereign, whom he accompanied to Scotland in 1822. The Baronet was an uneducated, uncouth Cockney, who came from Wapping, where his father dealt in sea-biscuits. He was a butt of Whig wit.

I must conclude this long and, I fear, intolerably tedious letter by reiterating the wish that Sir Walter Scott may yet decide upon visiting this country, which will be some recompence for the sorry specimens of English minds and manners with which our country abounds, and if, in a moment of youthful enthusiasm, I have drawn too flattering a picture of my country, it must be ascribed to that excess of national vanity which our English admirers are so fond of laying at our doors, as though John Bull was ever distinguished as a modest civil spoken gentleman.—Your obedient and humble servant,

DANL. WINNE.

From J. Fenimore Cooper

ST. OLIVE-SUR-SEINE,
Sept. 12, 1827.

MY DEAR SIR,—I should long since have written to you on the subject of the American edition of your works had I possessed any thing satisfactory to communicate. I wrote immediately to the Messrs. Carey, inclosing your letter, and took such other measures as I deemed best to secure my object. One paper, and that inclined among the first for talent and influence in the Country, had even begun to move in the matter, but was obliged to stop for want of a text. It seems that the Messrs. Carey chose to suppress your letter entirely. Of course the whole plan was rendered abortive. They wrote me word that they should do all they could, however, for your interest, and as you, shortly after, came out publickly, I advised that they should put themselves in direct communication without delay with the principal himself. This I presume has been done. . .[1]

Unjust U.S. Copyright Laws

This, Sir, is but a pitiful account of a project from which, I confess, I expected something more just to you, and more creditable to my country. In addition, I am sorry to add, that the plan of the new Law of Copyrights, as supported by the principal booksellers in the U. States, contains what I consider the most illiberal, as well as the most impolitic, feature of the old one. They require that the book should be first published in the U. States. This will interfere with your future interests. I can only advise you to do with my countrymen, as, in a smaller scale, I do with yours. I sell

[1] It was in the previous November that Scott met, in Paris, the author of *The Last of the Mohicans* and other marvels of our boyhood. "This man," he says in his Journal, "who has shown so much genius . . . proposed to me a mode of publishing in America, by entering the book as the property of a citizen. I will think of this. Every little helps, as the tod says, when . . . etc."

the sheets for what I can get, taking care that much more is paid me for even that small privilege than Mr. Carey has hitherto paid your bookseller. Colburn gives me £300, which doubled might be an inducement for you to take some effective steps to promote your own interests in America. I still think if Mr. Carey had tried the appeal, that the old project would have succeeded, and I cannot express my mortification that it should have been so tamely put down with so heavy a work as the *Life*.[1]

I have not yet read your biography of Napoleon. You doubtless know that the French abuse you a little, but as they began to do this, to my certain knowledge, five months before the book was published, you have no great reason to regard their criticisms.

French abuse

It would be impossible to write the truth on such a subject and please this nation. One frothy gentleman denounced you, in my presence, as having a low, vulgar style, very much such an one as characterised the pen of Shakespeare! This is truly a people, Sir Walter, given to much talking.

Our mutual acquaintance and your great admirer the Princess Galitzin has just gone to St. Petersbourg.[2] She had the sketch of your face, which Miss Scott thought so particularly like, engraved; and so you figure in another shape in the shop-windows of Paris. If anything occurs that I think may be improved on the old subject, I shall take the liberty of writing again. Until then, I beg leave to subscribe myself.—Very sincerely and respectfully yours,

J. Fenimore Cooper.

[1] *i.e.*, of Napoleon, in 9 vols. (1827).

[2] Scott and Cooper saw much of each other on this visit, sat to Mdlle Mirbel for their portraits, and attended a full-dress Reception by the Princess Galitzin—"so the Scotch and American lions took the field together," as Sir Walter said.

AULD REEKIE—MATTERS HISTORICAL AND SCANDALOUS

From the Duke of Buccleuch .	Finding of the Scottish Regalia.
C. K. Sharpe . .	Old Leith Jail: Sensation in Abercromby Place.
[*The same*] . .	Woodcuts—and Miss Crump's Parrot.
Lord Meadowbank .	How the Castle was Held in the '45.
Lord Melville . .	John Knox versus St. Giles.

AULD REEKIE—MATTERS HISTORICAL AND SCANDALOUS

In the wide background of this Letter-Book picture of Scott's times, London and Edinburgh stand out with a prominence that at once marks the social rivalry of the two capitals. That rivalry was most keenly demonstrated in Literature ; and the men largely responsible for the most brilliant epoch in the long and eventful history of the Northern city were Scott and Jeffrey, and Constable, —the " Napoleon of publishers " as the last was called. All three were men of big purpose, with Sir Walter towering above the other two—as he did in stature. A contemporary practice, which I have not seen recorded before, and which illustrates the great literary activity in the two centres, is mentioned in a letter from William Stewart Rose to his friend Scott :

" You will easily believe that my directions to Ballantyne did not relate to you. There are in this Town a set of curious impertinents, the critics of booksellers' shops, who frequent printing-houses, in order to pronounce upon the merits of works previous to their public appearance. As I had no disposition to submit myself to this sort of preliminary inquest, I gave strict orders, when I printed *Amadis*, that the MS. should not be shewn. I repeated these to Ballantyne, without considering much whether the same necessity for them existed in the present case. I will desire him to shew you the whole of the work, if you have any curiosity to see it."

There is—and, I suppose, always has been—a dour, unyielding, unchanging aspect about Auld Reekie. And yet this time was one of many changes for her. Among them, venerable old buildings and traditional sites gave way to new necessities ; but not without a struggle while lovers of antiquity like Sir Walter Scott and Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe were there to use influence, and pens, and ready wit. My selections would not be true to the Letter-Books were I to omit, as examples, the efforts of this incomparable couple to save the façade of Leith jail ; and Lord Melville's counterstroke to prevent " John Knox's " insult to St. Giles. And if these

grave matters must have their place to complete the picture, I cannot suppress—if I would—Miss Crump and her naughty parrot, or the seven singers who caused such a commotion in Abercromby Place. The letters in this little group, serving to give us just that requisite touch with the wonderful past, appropriately begin with one referring to the finding of the Crown Jewels of Scotland. For it was Sir Walter who prompted the Prince Regent to grant the commission for examining the Crown Room in Edinburgh Castle and opening the mysterious Kist (chest), which had lain under the thick dust of a century's undisturbed repose. This awful and lawful occasion was the subject of one of Lockhart's best stories. The finding of the Regalia deeply stirred Scott's national pride, and also his antiquarian enthusiasm. His excitement so worked on the feelings of his younger daughter Anne that when they—with Sir Walter's fellow-commissioners—revisited the castle, she nearly fainted on the chest being again opened. Suddenly she was startled by hearing her father agitatedly exclaim "By God, no!" One of the commissioners, less awed than Scott, had facetiously made a gesture to put the recovered crown on the head of one of the ladies near-by. The aspect of Sir Walter made him lay down the diadem in painful embarrassment; and the novelist, whispering "Pray forgive me," led his daughter outside, and "he never spoke all the way home, but every now and then I felt his arm tremble." It should be said—as a pendant to the letter—that the opening of the Kist put an end to many weird tales that had gathered with its dust. It is surprising that the Duke of Buccleuch should have considered the possibility of the Regalia being sent to England. However, there was no need to call out the military; and any day the Scottish Crown Jewels may be seen in Edinburgh Castle, an' a' fur naething.

FINDING OF THE SCOTTISH REGALIA

From the fourth Duke of Buccleuch

BOWHILL,
Janry. 20th, 1817.

My Dear Sir,—I have receiv'd yours, and shall be most happy to help to open the Kist. I remember well when I was a boy, and my father's Regt. in the castle, I often surveyed with great awe the baricaded windows of that dreadful room in which it was supposed there were as many Devils as Crowns and Sceptres, and I have still an indistinct recollection of the stories that were told of the dreadful consequences which would ensue, were it opened. The room has

been proved to be harmless, but I strongly suspect that the dislodged fiends took refuge in the Chest. So beware! My father told me that the said Chest did not appear weighty for its size. I remember reading the appendix to Thomson's publication, in which I think the contents are accurately mentioned. I suspect we shall find no records. But we will hope for the best.

Is there no closet? If the Crown etc. are found, what is to be done with them? If they are sent to England we shall be mobbed to a dead certainty.

I had got scent of a Baron's gown for our friend the Register, but not Baron Norton's. In the latter case, the transaction is more curious and intricate than I could have supposed. I am delayed here a day by my Daughter Margaret having caught a bad cold.—Yours sincerely,

BUCCLEUCH.

OLD LEITH JAIL: SENSATION IN ABERCROMBY PLACE

From Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe PRINCE'S STREET, EDINBURGH. Aug. 20, 1824.

DEAR SIR WALTER,—. . . Now kind Sir I must tell you that I would never have permitted my gratitude to make you pay postage for nothing had I not got a most lamentable case to state, which I think will interest you, and in which your powerful intercession may be of great avail. The magistrates of Edin: whose good taste has long been the admiration of the world, not contented with making the old town of Edin: a new Athens, have extended their magic wand (alias Major Weir's rung) to Leith; and the front of the old jail, built by Mary the Queen Regent, and a most beautiful morsel, is on the point of sinking down before it.[1] I know you have seen it and admired it. The foundation stone is laid of the new barbarity, designed by Mr. Gillespie, and the destruction of the old building commences next week. But the Provost Henderson, tho' an unshorn old ram, in many things has a turn for preserving antiques which makes him a very jewel of a Provost; and I do think that a letter from your strong pen, and a little oil for his fleece (to understand the extreme beauty of my allusions I trust you know

[1] The old Leith Tolbooth (or Town Hall), used also as a prison, was built in 1565. The proposal to demolish it, that prompted this letter, caused Scott, Sharpe, and other lovers of antiquity to form a deputation to the Lord Provost. His decision was that as the new designs had already cost much money, they could not be altered. And so the fine old façade had to go.

Major Weir's wand = a black staff he always carried, believed to have magic properties (see page 186 and *n.*).

that my Lord was originally a herd boy from Peebles) might go far to save the outside wall of this building which is the last thing of its kind left in this part of the world. Indeed the projecting window and outside stair are more picturesque than any like object which I remember hereabouts. To this I need scarcely add that if you should resolve to stretch forth your saving hand, there is no time to be lost, and that the stately Chief Magistrate of New Athens hath his proud Mansion House in St. John's Street. . .

By far the most interesting literary topic at present here proceeds from Sir Alex[r] Muir Mackenzie, who has come hither in a most mysterious fashion to print a book. He won't tell what it is about, so some people say it is on the state of the Nation; others, on the Musical Festival; and others, a historical description of and eulogism on the seven wise mistresses, his own daughters, who were persuaded lately by Count Flahault I suspect for his own amusement, that they possessed voices like angels. So the whole nest of owls came into Abercromby Place for instruction; and frightened every bird out of the gardens. No jackdaw dared come within a mile; and the rats emigrated. The only things with ears that stood them were the cats—and they have looked very melancholy and modest ever since. Whatever be the subject of Sir Alexander's work, it will be well worth reading, if one may judge from his former productions, in which the curious infelicity of the style could only be equalled by the extreme folly of his arguments. Pray, dear Sir Walter, excuse this scrawl, and have the goodness to present my best wishes and respects to your family, and tell the ladies that I have just heard of a marriage which I think will amuse them—Mr. James Macconnochie to Miss Scott of Sinton. I will add no more but that I am your devoted slave till death.

C. K. S.

WOODCUTS—AND MISS CRUMP'S PARROT

From the same

EDIN:

Friday Morning, Sept. 24, 1824.

My Dear Sir Walter,—On Tuesday morning last I dispatched, under the sage directions of Mr. John Stevenson,[1] the valuable books you were so good as to lend me, and which I have kept too long. Nevertheless I have still the audacity to retain two volumes for the sake of collation. . . You have lately made me so rich in books that I am almost ashamed of my cormorant appetite, to use Lord

[1] An Edinburgh bookseller.

Fountainhall's phrase concerning the Duchess of Lauderdale. . . But of all the volumes you were so kind as to send, I had not one before, save *The Cloud*, and this second *Cloud* is much cleaner than mine. As to the duplicates of the ballads, &c. you can scarcely imagine how much I prize them, principally on account of the wooden cuts which were the delight of my early youth. For it is a truth, which you must have remarked, that none of our best ballads ever found its way into the gingerbread baskets, or upon the stalls. These ditties are for the most part naught. Item, I discover that all the amusing wooden cuts are English, and from Newcastle. I have examined all that you sent in unbound, and have added a few, which I think you have not. On the whole, I think those volumes which you collected yourself (of which I retain one) are by much the most curious and valuable.

I am sorry now that I had any hand in writing you to make a request or signify a wish to an Edin : Provost, which has not been complied with. My only comfort is that his wife is jealous of Mrs. Coutts, and claws him off finely for his concupiscence. It is said that she threatened to make use of the silver dish in a way I cannot name. But this may only be scandal—as the story also of Miss Crump's marriage to Mr. Miller, the bookseller, who is now our next door neighbour. But it is certain that the Miss Pringles complained to the police of Miss Crump's parrot because it spoke filthy discourse from the window ; and that one of Miss Crump's Irish lovers, before she left her own country, thought he made a puzzle of her name in these lines :—

I love of perfiction an iligant lump[1]
. . . . . .

I had a packet lately from that Orpheus of Paisley, Mr. Blaikie, containing some translations from his old Viol de Gambo book ; tho' it appears to me that most of these tunes I have seen elsewhere, as in the Gentlemen's Dancing Master, and other books of K. Chas. the 2d time. Yet such a collection made in Scotland is very interesting ; and if he were to translate also another and a more curious MS. music-book[2] which Mr. Skene pointed out to me in the Ad. Lib., he might make a volume well worth printing. I shall write to him on the subject ; but in the meantime it is seemly no longer to pester you. So with my best respects and wishes to all at Abbotsford, I rest, my dear Sir Walter, your ever faithful obliged slave,

C. K. S.

[1] The omitted line is too scaulduddery.

[2] Skene of Hallyards's MS.

HOW THE CASTLE WAS HELD IN THE '45

From Lord Meadowbank

MEADK. KIRKNEWTON,
Nov. 28, [1828].

My Dear Sir Walter,—The person who was L^{t}. Governor of Edin^{r} Castle during the Rebellion 1745 was General George Preston. He was then 86 years of age, and on the landing of the Pretender left Valleyfield, where he resided with his Nephew Sir George (your friend, Sir Robert's father) and assumed the command of the Garrison; and, being lame with the Gout, insisted on being frequently during the night carried round the posts in a Sedan chair. What seems strange is that having previously been affected with deafness, he on this occasion recovered his hearing so as to be sensible of the slightest noise.

On the approach of the Rebels, General Guest, who was then commander of the forces in Scotland, quitted the City and went into the Castle where he was intitled to have assumed the command. Accordingly he intimated to General Preston his opinion that the Castle was indefensible, and that they ought to treat for a surrender. But on this opinion being combated and Genl. P. declaring that he would be answerable for its defence if allowed to pursue his own measures, Genl. Guest stated that he came there not to dictate but to seek protection, and would leave the operations entirely under the command of the Governor. But that for all the consequences to the City of Ed^{r}. of a protracted resistance he must be alone responsible as he, Guest, must only be considered as a private individual.

In consequence of this, Genl. Preston immediately notified to the Magistrates that if a certain quantity of provisions were not lodged daily at the barrier for the use of the Garrison he would fire upon the town; and they, having hesitated and delayed compliance, several shots were fired down the High-street. On this the Pretender, who had arrived, notified to him that if another shot was discharged from the Castle orders would be given to burn Valleyfield. But on the veteran replying that the King's frigate, then lying in the Firth, should have orders to batter down Wemyss Castle (belonging I suppose to L^{d}. Elcho) the threat was never put into execution.

On the issue of the seige and the arrival of the Duke of Cumberland at the Pallace the General was carried down to wait upon him; and the Duke, hearing of his arrival and being aware of the infirmity

in his limbs, came out to meet him, expressed his regret at his not having anticipated his visit, and said he had the special command of the King to have waited upon him to thank him for the defence he had made, and the spirit he had exhibited in undertaking a responsibility which had produced so favorable result to the War.

I have seen the different papers establishing the accu[racy] of the above statement. And I may add what may gratify your Jacobitical propensities—that the greater part of the expence incurred was defrayed by General Preston himself, for which he never was repaid; and that in the teeth of an absolute and voluntary promise from the Duke to confer upon his Nephew (the present Lady Baird's father) a commission in the Guards, nothing was done for him, or any one of the family.

General Preston's life was a very singular one. He was in the Dutch Guards, and came over with that great King in honor of whose memory I had once the gratification of seeing you contribute a cheer. He was then made successively Colonel of the Cameronians and the Greys; served under the Duke of Marlborough, and was by him made Gov[r]. of Nieuport (and Namur I believe), held for 20 years the chief command in Scotland, and died soon after the Rebellion of the effects of a ball which he had received from the treachery of a Frenchman to whom he had given quarter at the Battle of Ramilies.[1]

From being a staunch Whig (like myself) he was obnoxious to the Court of St. Germains, and is abused by Lockhart[2] in his Correspondence. In the same book there is mentioned 20 years before the Rebellion one *Major Guest* as being a person well inclined to the Pretender. Is this the General, and do these propensities account for the pusilinamity in the City of Edinr. and for the which he had to deliver up the Castle.[3]

[1] This is apparently a memorandum for Scott's use. Sir George Preston was a Whig; and, curiously enough, was suspected of Jacobite tendencies, as he was a Scotsman. General Guest was a Tory and Jacobite; but was supported by the Government, which was strangely ignorant of what was going on in Scotland and also strangely dilatory in securing information and sending help. It has often been suggested that General Guest, as an avowed Jacobite, really wished to place the Castle in Jacobite hands—and was carefully watched by the veteran Preston. In spite of Cumberland's action, Preston was afterwards very badly treated by the Government.

[2] *i.e.*, George Lockhart, the early 18th-century Jacobite. His Memoirs (1714) and *Papers* (1817) are most valuable sources of the history of Jacobitism.

[3] Edinburgh was singular in not realising the danger of Jacobite capture until it was too late to do anything. On Sept. 15th, when Prince Charlie reached Linlithgow, the alarm bell was rung. Only 180 men of the Edinburgh Regiment (and no volunteers) accompanied the dragoons to Corstorphine, a village near Edinburgh, in order to check the Highlanders, at whose appearance the dragoons fled. The City magistrates were not bolder; and Lord Meadowbank seems correct enough in suggesting that many had Jacobite propensities.

I suppose I have written ten times more than you wanted, but you will only of course use what you want. I remain, My dear Scott, yours faithfully,

A. MACONOCHIE.

JOHN KNOX VERSUS ST. GILES

From Lord Melville

ADMIRALTY,
31st October, 1829.

Private.

MY DEAR SIR WALTER,—I am in trouble, and I hope, when I state the cause of it, that you will be the same ; it is always comfortable to have a friend and companion in distress.

You are well acquainted with a certain St. Giles' Church in Edinburgh, now about to be restored (I hope) to its original stateliness. You also know that surmounted by its Crown, it has hitherto looked down upon the rest of the City, save and except His Majesty's Castle, and no other building has hitherto presumed to exalt itself above the said Crown. Her younger sister and subject, the Iron Kirk, has lately been a little uppish with a new head dress ; but still she admits and acknowledges her own inferiority, and is content to remain in her proper station. Recently however, the Civic Rulers, as they are called, of Edinburgh, have bethought themselves to build, or at least to lay the foundation of, a double Church at the head of the Lawnmarket, and therefore I presume on an elevation considerably higher than the ancient Cathedral, and on which, moreover, the Newspapers announce that it is intended to mount a Tower 250 feet high with a spire on the top of it. As if that insult to St. Giles' and its Royal Crown were not enough, the double bodied Omnibus is to be nicknamed " John Knox's Church." I am told that the plan and elevation of it are handsome ; but my quarrel with it is that it has no business there, or at least the Tower, and that John Knox's building with its tall appendage will look down upon, and diminish the grandeur of, the Cathedral and its Crown. I cannot imagine any thing in worse taste than the erection of a building, whether it be a Church or any thing else, in the old Town of Edinburgh, which shall overtop St. Giles' and detract from the imposing dignity which it has hitherto maintained with reference to the rest of the City, ancient as well as modern.

Such is my present grievance, and if you and others whose opinions are worth attending to, entertain the same sentiments on

the subject, and will back me in resisting John Knox, or at least his Tower, I think our opposition may be made effectual.

A worthy citizen with whom I do not happen to be acquainted, but who presided at a public dinner lately at Edinburgh, chose to give my health, as the Newspapers informed us, with an addition as to my supposed propensity to do good, and that he would reverse in my favor the old saying of " where there is a will, there is a way," and would say " where there is a way, there is the will." Now with all deference for my worthy friend, he might as well have allowed the proverb to remain, like St. Giles' Church, in its original position relatively to the present question. I am not at all sure that the snubbing John Knox would be in conformity with my friend's notion of " doing good " ; but on the present occasion, be it for good or evil, I have all the will, and I think there is a way. Some years ago I prevailed on the Treasury to allot £10,000, payable by instalments in three years, to assist in restoring St. Giles', and recently there is a demand for £3,000 more to fit up the place of meeting for the General Assembly. The first mentioned sum was granted distinctly and positively for the purpose of restoring and beautifying ; but if another edifice, such as I have described, and which will have the effect which I think it will with reference to the Cathedral, is to be erected, it is a virtual breach of faith on the part of the City, and I can aver at least for myself that I never would have applied for, and I don't believe they ever would have obtained one farthing of the £10,000, if I could have conceived it possible that such a heretical act would have been attempted. Under those circumstances I should make my appeal to the Treasury to stop supplies until security should be given that the project of the Tower should be abandoned and not renewed.[1]

Pray make enquiry when you go to Edinburgh into all these matters and let me know the result, but chiefly whether your own sentiments coincide with mine. Sir Henry Jardine will no doubt be able to inform you as to the money part of the question.—Believe me ever, yours most sincerely,

MELVILLE.

[1] The reverence for St. Giles's, with its part in Scottish history from the Reformation, assured the Viscount Melville of Scott's active sympathy. Although the statesman, by his threat to stop Treasury supplies, was successful in postponing the building of " John Knox's Church," now known as the Tolbooth Church, its tower, when completed in 1844, did rear above St. Giles's handsome crown. What was worse, in the restoration of St. Giles the architect Brown—on the straight Jane (or Giles) and no nonsense principle—got rid of all its " curlie-wurlies and open-steek hems."

CURIOUS GRIST TO THE *WAVERLEY* MILL

From M. W. Hartstonge .	A Bishop's Lunch.
a shepherd . .	Of Fairies.
Anon . . .	Two Glasgow Characters.
Donald Campbell .	Ossian and Blue Highlander.
the Duke of Buckingham	What the Canon's Wife found.
Dean Allot. . .	An Old Charge against Dean Swift.
Robert Chambers .	A Story of Bonny Prince Charlie.
James Usher . .	Why he Blushed.
[Document] . .	The Six-Feeters.
G. Wishart . .	"Inside" Information for Anglers.
Mrs. M. A. Hughes .	On the Trail again.
The Rev. Patrick Graham	Scott kills an Old Friend.
Mrs. M. A. Hughes .	A Ghost Story.
Lady Louisa Stuart .	Congreve, the Duchess of Marlborough, and the Oxford Papers.

CURIOUS GRIST TO THE *WAVERLEY* MILL

One of the most notable features of the Letter-Books is the number of communications containing possible material for Scott's use. Was there an unknown ballad to be heard from the mumbling lips of a Scotch granny, or a new legend of Rob Roy from a Highlander burning with the old unquenchable fire, or some fresh incident of the 'Forty-Five? then half the Scottish nation were hieing over knoll and burn to gather the precious relic for the Author of *Waverley*. At least, that is an impression after twice going through the Letter-Books. If it is a little heightened, can it be wondered at, after my not less adventurous pursuit through nearly 6,000 letters?

Sometimes the material came from family archives in an age slowly becoming aware of the dreadful crimes that had been committed in the destruction of old records. The destroyers were still at their work. For instance, a trusted correspondent sends to Scott copies of four letters by Swift, and says they were snatched from the vandal arm of Mr. Gerrard's cook-maid, who was pleased to convert several of the Dean's original letters into ammunition for the barbaric purpose of singeing her poultry. "To what base uses we may return, Horatio! I hear you pathetically exclaim," adds the writer. But we know of baser uses, remembering that the learned Blades found unknown Caxtons in a W.C. But it is too dreadful to dwell upon the thought of destroyed manuscripts whose treasures of learning, poetry, and prose were never given to the world. We have seen Scott urging the preservation of what, in an old library, might appear to be worthless books and pamphlets. His care for old records and reviving of legends all but lost were no small part of his accomplishment; and the contributions of his correspondents, as here represented, are tributes to his zeal and friendship. More often than not they came too late as grist to his mill, being inspired by what he had already written. True to his faith, he stored them away for that day when, as he said, they would be curious.

Not only worthies of Scotland, but equally zealous admirers in England and Ireland played their part in the great round-up of ballads and legends for the World's darling Bard and Novelist.

One of these hunters was Bernard Barton, the Quaker poet, whom I single out here—not for the interest of his letter, but for his unique method of addressing it. Barton evidently was both unaware of Scott's address, and whether he was in Edinburgh or London at the time. So, writing from Woodbridge (Suffolk), he sent off his folded sheet merely directed on the cover by this impromptu verse :

To
Sir Walter Scott, in London, or elsewhere !
He needs not ask, whose far extended fame
Is spread abroad o'er Earth, like light, or air,
A local habitation for his Name.

Even remembering Scott's " far extended fame," it says much for the Mail-coach postal service of the time that the letter, thus happily addressed, reached him in London in four days. There has surely never been an author who had such a large correspondence, leavened with so much informative material, as this diverting group of letters shall reveal.

A BISHOP'S LUNCH

From Matthew Weld Hartstonge MOLESWORTH STREET, DUBLIN, March 12th, 1816.

Many, very many thanks, My dear Sir, for your truly kind and additional proof of recollection, in the presentation copy of *Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk*, which you have so very obligingly given me. . .

However admired and approved by the public voice *Paul's Letters* [1] have been, they have afforded additional Charms to me from the many endearing localities of *your home*, which are contained in the work. And I think, too, I could point to some of the correspondents—for example, the Major, I suppose to be Major Scott ; Sister Margaret—Mrs. Scott ; the Laird, to be Lord Somerville ; the pastor, the Revd. Mr. Thomson of Melrose ; and James (who subordinately flourishes in more letters) to be your old and faithful and attached servant, John Macbeth, who I actually think I see at this moment in Castle Street, holding the parlour door (as you describe him) with one hand, and with the other smoothing down his venerable locks, while with a smile he enquires anxiously for the safety of his regarded master. . .

With an Epigram, which I was told the other day, this letter shall close. It was written upon a Dr. Averill, Bishop of Limerick,

[1] *Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk*, by Sir Walter Scott, which had just been published.

who was—I believe—the predecessor of Doctor *Barnard* [1] (Dr. Percy's and Goldsmith's Bishop). Doctor Averill had been "in his day" a most notorious epicure or more properly speaking a downright gourmand. While at dinner, and busily employed at one dish, he has often enjoyed the other viands as it were by anticipation, beckoning towards his favourite dishes which he intended next to attack, and upon which he cast a longing, lingering eye. Every day at noon, his favorite luncheon was (strange to tell) a quart well loaded with oysters! which were swallowed down nearly wholesale. This, his well known daily *Beverage*, was punningly but somewhat profanely called, "Averill's miraculous *draught* of fishes." His lordship's notorious fondness for the pleasures of the table, and most especially for oysters, provoked some wag to compose the following as his

Epitaph.

Here lies Bishop Averill
Amid these dark Cloisters;
When the last Trump shall speak,
If he do not awake—
Bawl boldly out—"fine oysters."

Always most truly and sincerely yours,
MATTHEW WELD HARTSTONGE.

OF FAIRIES

THE following letter and the next but one are given not so much as grist to the mill as by way of curiosities which for their superstition and sentiment are pieces essential to our mosaic of the times. This first one, from a shepherd, with its struggling belief in the fairies and brownies of his wild fastnesses, is remarkable not only for its language and sensibility, but also for its tribute to Scott's native craftsmanship.

From a shepherd June 24th, 1820.

SIR,—I am an obscure, solitary individual, and have almost all my life, which is now better than fifty years, lived in the wildest districts in the south of Scotland. During that time I have struggled hard with storms and drifts and hurricanes and tempests; these years and the dreadful agitations of the elements, I find, are now tanning my complexion into a dun and gloomy colour, and this dingy hue I find rapidly increasing of late. I have an Itch for reading, but it is seldom I can indulge myself in this amusement. The first book of yours I saw was the *Minstrel[sy] of the Scottish Border*. When ye described the manners and customs, the attributes and pecu-

[1] See page 208.

liarities of the Faeries and Brownies, it revived the Ideas which legends and tales of my own Country had deposited in my memory in my years of infancy and childhood. When darkness overtook me in our lonely wilds, I really felt some trepidation lest a party of these elfish creatures should fall in with me in their peregrinations from glen to glen. However, the impression is now tolerably worn away, and I am only anxious to know whether ye really believe in the existence of such Beings. I think it was above twenty years before I saw any more of your Books [1]: till a generous good-hearted Lady, alighting one day upon my Cot, told me she would procure me some of them. She directly sent me *The Bride of Lammermuir* and a *Legend of Montrose* [2]; and immediately after it was published she sent me *Ivanhoe* and just now *The Monastery*. I had a reading of *The Antiquary* from another person. In *The Monastery* when ye mentioned Glendayrg (I spell it according to the common pronunciation, the ay sounding as in lay or ray) it awoke a vivid recollection of my feats in the days of former years. The one ye mention " about the head of Etterick " is the one to which I allude, and I find there is a striking resemblance between it and the one in which the Glendinning tower stood. This Glen is about a mile and a half long, and the principal communication between the head of the Etterick and the head of the Esk is along its bottom. The road crosses the turbid current several times; and in wet weather is almost impassible. When the road goes to the height or waterfall it enters another Glen which is longer, more rugged, and still more intricate to travel. It is also named Glendayrg, and is one of the principal springs of the Esk and runs nearly S.E. . . .

Mystic gambols in the glen

In almost every cleugh and ravine in Etterick head the fairies have been known to hold their revels; and in every sunny den they have performed those mystic gambols peculiar to their whimsical race. A friend of mine, who is not yet an old man, told me that he was one day straight opposite this rowntreegutter [3] on the other side of the Glen; he saw the sides and bottom of the Linn, better than he had been in it; and for a good part of an hour he heard like a person driving something heavily forward as with a hammer. Though there were two of them, and it broad daylight, they did not chuse to examine the Linn, piece by piece. They might be at the distance of two thousand steps. You may believe me; my

[1] Actually it must have been under, but what was a year or two in a shepherd's life of solitary communion with Nature!

[2] *Tales of My Landlord*, Third Series, 4 vols.; published 1818.

[3] A swift-running brook.

friend told me this ; and he is not a man that deals in the marvellous ; and I really believe he heard what I have told you. Had they thought there had been a human being they would have gone to it. Both the Glendayrgs agree in the following things : as their waters are deeply tinctured with moss, they are of reddish or brown colour ; and in the middle of both the Glens there are dry round knolls very like that, I think, on which Simon Glendinning's tower stood. The hills on both sides Phaup Glendayrg rise easy from the bottom, are green to the tops, and are the best sheep pasture I ever saw. A circumstance connected with Phaup Glendayrg indicates it to have been the abode or resort of some religionist when monastic establishments abounded in Scotland. On the side of the brook about a thousand yards before it joins the Etterick is a knoll (vulgarly knowe) called St. Eenwull's Knowe : from its side gushes an abundent spring of fine water named St. Eenwull's Well. On the top of the knoll and around its sides have been houses, as the vestiges of them still remain ; but their foundations are now nearly sunk below the surface of the earth. Thus much for a description of Etterick Glendayrg.

I cannot help telling you that I am astonished, perfectly astonished, how ye have acquired the Scottish dialect and phraseology so exactly. Certainly neither your education nor studies could discover ought of that antiquated language : yet when ye chuse to adopt it ye have it as truly as if ye knew no other, but had lived in the most sequestered nook of the Forest all your life. Of all your writings that I have seen, I like the *Legend of Montrose* and *The Monastery* best. Edie Ochiltree in *The Antiquary* is very good : whenever he speaks it is always what one in his situation and of his trade would say ; and when the adept broke the pick in digging for the treasure ; and Edie exclaim'd against the folk of Fairport for selling such useless things, it is really extraordinary. But I think I never saw nor read nothing truer to nature than when the Duke of Argyle gave a look to his sore arm that was swinging in a napkin by his side when the marshal airs that were heard among the hills announced that a party of horse was coming to the field : this is up to nature—and up to nature in its most intricate and nicest parts. I have for the last three or four days been tending my sheep on a high hill named Penvallah : there is no human being near, and I have been most agreeably entertained with *The Monastery*. I can scarcely select one passage more beautiful than another, yet when ye say that Halbert alighted from the heart of

Nature in her nicest parts

the oak with as little injury as the falcon stooping for his meal, it is truly excellent. On a tranquil summer's evening I have sometimes witnessed the aptness of this comparison: the eagle, that noble bird, wheels her spiral course to such a height that she appears like a small dot on the clear sky; sometimes the eye loses her altogether: anon, she appears like a speck of vapour wandering over the blue void; after taking a number of circles at that extraordinary elevation she descends by the same winding course she arose, but only in larger circles, keeping her wings as steady and expanded all the while as ever ye saw the arms of a mock-man that had been set up to fray the crows from a field of new sown barley. When she comes near her favourite cliff she stretches out her legs to meet its ragged point, yet alights as safe and easy as if she had descended to the ground and meadow from only a few yards elevation. So fell Halbert from his oak, and so stoops the eagle from her airy flight.

The eagle in her flight

I should now, Sir, give some reasons for sending you an anonymous letter. Indeed, I have none that can fully justify my conduct: I only saw there was a resemblance between old Simon's Glendayrg and the one in Etterick head, and I thought it would not be unentertaining to let you know in what that resemblance consisted. My fancy has been strongly excited by reading these books, especially *The Monastery*, and I could not help freely telling you my thoughts on some passages. You will find bad grammar in almost every sentence, but I know ye will have the goodness to dispense with this.[1] I cannot rectify it myself. That ye may long enjoy the honors conferred upon you by your Sovereign is the ardent and genuine wish of your Humble servt. &c.

[unsigned.]

TWO GLASGOW CHARACTERS

THE eccentric character of whom the following *two* stories are told was evidently known to Scott, who endorsed the letters:—Anonymous. About old Carrick.

From an anonymous correspondent

GLASGOW,
June 29, 1821.

SIR,—If the unknown author of *Old Mortality* heard two anecdotes which are related at present in this my Native City, he might perhaps think that the Actress was a genuine sister to Old Milnwood.

[1] It is only fair to say that the errors were comparatively few. The letter is endorsed by Scott as from a shepherd.

This actress is the late Housekeeper and Companion of an old miserly Banker who died a few days ago leaving half a million, but without bequeathing a penny to any charitable use.

1. On ordinary occasions Cheese was an article of luxury far beyond the routine of their family economy. But if a stranger was perchance invited to share the homely dinner, Miss P. . . would visit the Provision Shops, and get a small sample of cheese from each of which Mr. C. . . might make his selection for a future purchase. But these samples were cautiously put together for the use of the festive board.

2. Mr. C. . . having suddenly died very soon after he had eaten an uncommonly hearty breakfast, Miss P., after the first burst of grief was abated, reflected with concern that had the death taken place a little earlier, the breakfast would have been saved.—I have the honor to be,

an unknown tho' great admirer
of the Author of *Waverley*.

OSSIAN AND BLUE HIGHLANDER

This letter may give us quiet amusement at the spectacle of enthusiastic clubmen, under the inspiration of Ossian and blue Highlander, on the reeling summit, surveying fourteen counties and all the cities of Scotland. It may raise doubt whether any club to-day would or could stand twenty-four hours of such sublime exertion and refection. But there will be no question of its truthfulness to Scottish sentiment. Incidentally, we may picture the worthy president, doubtless with the said Highlander at his elbow, obviously straining himself to "write up" to the great idol of Scotland.

From Donald Campbell LOCHGOILHEAD BY CAIRNDOW,
26th April, 1822.

Sir,—At a committee meeting held here yesterday of the Highland Mountain Club of Lochgoilhead (the only institution of the kind in Scotland), convened for the purposes of arranging the necessary preparations for the ensuing general meeting 22d June (the Summer Solstice), being the day originally fixed upon for holding the anniversary, in conformity to the usuage of Fingalian taste and independence, it was moved, and unanimously voted, should it meet with your concurrence, to enrol you as a constituent member. This was done in consideration of your well-known attachment and readiness on all occasions to promote the interest and spread the fame of every circumstance connected with the Highlands, for which

the meeting return you their grateful thanks. As President of the Club I was enjoined to transmit you without delay these our vote and sentiment.

The Club was established in 1815 principally with a view to adopt the dress, cultivate the language, and to perpetuate the manners and refined sentiments of our remote ancestors as [in]culcated by the sublime immortal Ossian,[1] and for several charitable and scientific purposes. The Club, having partaken of some refection at the Inn, march off in grand style to the top of a lofty mountain, preceded by the bagpipes playing national airs, and their Officer bearing their flag. On their journey they occasionally regale themselves with a bumper of the genuine blue Highlander. In the progress of their ascent objects expand and multiply exceedingly until their arrival on the summit six o'clock in the evening. Then what a glorious prospect bursts instantaneously on the sight. When we contemplate on what appears to be a boundless horizon, a serene, beautiful, ethereal expanse, the floating clouds richly and variously tinged with the sun's reclining rays, a multiplicity of hills and mountains towering like so many pyramids, those in the immediate neighbourhood seen partly covered with stupendous clifty rocks, among which are numerous caves, and chasms, and broken fragments, and excavations &c. Some of the caves are of great magnitude, of several commodious apartments, and completed in a style of order and original grandeur superior to the most finished artificial structure. Those hills are likewise seen partly covered with black peat moss and heath, but principally with luxuriant verdure, on which innumerable flocks and herds graze and gambol. The winding picturesque declivities abounding with reverberating waterfalls, and limpid streamlets meandering to the silvan shaded glens, ravines, and vales below where they swell to small rivers teeming with salmon and speckled trout. Confining the attention to a short distance from the summit, we occasionally observe the timid mountain hare carelessly limping about, or running at full speed for fear, the cunning, ruthless fox cautiously moving on to seize his prey. The rest, or flight of birds peculiar to elevated situations, whistling or whirring in our ears, &c. &c. In the delightful expansive diversified prospect that we descry, a part of fourteen Counties, likewise a part of the Emerald Isle interspersed with innumerable fresh water lakes, and lochs, bays and seas branching

Bagpipes and bumpers

[1] He was still holding something of his sway despite the coming of the Romancers.

from the Atlantic, a multiplicity of islands, promontories, and necks of land varying in shade and form in proportion to distance. In the group the whole of the beautiful interesting Firth of Clyde constitutes a prominent part. The briny undulating element containing on its bosom swarms of fishing boats collected in fleets, or scattered in every direction, a great number of coasting vessels of from twenty to a hundred tons burden, ships of every description with their canvas unfurled, ploughing the deep, loaded with the exports of our country, or returning fraught with the produce and luxuries of foreign climes. To vary the scenery, a distant view of the cities and towns of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Paisley, Dumbarton, Greenock, Ayr, Stirling, Perth &c. &c., with the most of the intervening richly cultivated charming country. In the whole nothing attracts the attention, or commands our admiration, more than the sublime uncommon appearance of the sun for about three-quarters of an hour before he sinks in the ocean, and for the same time, tho' quite different—yet equally grand, after he rises at half-past two in the morning. If the silent peerless Queen of the night happens to be in her second or third phase, aided by the brilliancy of the twinkling stars, [she] renders the interval a clear, interesting, charming twilight. The whole is the cause of such agreeable sensations as baffle the pen to describe, or imagination to paint; to have an adequate conviction [it] requires to be seen. Indeed a person finds himself most completely in fairyland, or rather fancies himself wafted thro' the mid regions of ether, enjoying celestial felicity.

The Club repairs at ten at night to a commodious comfortable tent previously erected in the centre of a wide plain on the summit covered with thick moss, soft as velvet. After a sumptuous supper served in the true style of Highland hospitality, and a bumper of genuine mogbea the Cuach Withair (Yeu bowl) and Sligean Creachais (Scollop shells) are produced, it being well known it was out of these our remote ancestors drank their favourite beverage. After every standard toast there is a discharge of musquetry. The conversation, song, toasts, and sentiments are principally in Gaelic. Thus with occasional marches, strathspeys, and reels from the bagpipes, the time passes joyously and insensibly away until, summoned at ten in the morning to drink a bumper of whiskey to "happy to meet, sorry to part," and happy to meet there, or on a similiar spot, next year, and another Deoch an Doris, the Club descend to the reverberating sound of the bagpipes and of musquetry.

Bumpers and musquetry

At five in the afternoon they retire to the Inn to dine, to which the principal inhabitants of the neighbourhood are invited. The time passes with the utmost conviviality until they separate at a late hour next morning, to meet the 22d June next year, being highly pleased with their excursion. . . Your most Obed^{t} hum^{le} Serv^{t},

DONALD CAMPBELL.

WHAT THE CANON'S WIFE FOUND

WE have had forewarnings about Mrs. Mary Ann Hughes. Now she arrives in an episode that must have caused much merriment within the stately walls of Stow Castle and Abbotsford. She was the wife of a canon of St. Paul's Cathedral, and an old friend and ardent admirer of Scott. When her garrulity did not run to depressing news of the dead and dying, she was a most industrious seeker after antiquarian information, etc., for her hero. In the end she proved more fortunate than in this episode, revealed by the Duke of Buckingham, when she hoped to have found some "family" papers for Scott's use.

From the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos

STOW,
June 11th, 1824.

SIR,—I take advantage of a letter, which Mrs. Hughes wrote to the Duchess of Buckingham, to introduce myself to you and to express the gratification and pleasure which I feel at being allowed to rank myself amongst your acquaintances. . .

Mrs. Hughes mentioned the wish you had expressed to have the use of a Memoir which my old and excellent friend Dr. Gabell had, as you believed, placed in my hands after having rescued it out of the Ruins of the Bastille. I delayed thus long writing to you, because I was determined to make a thorough Search before I did so. My good friend believed, as you do, that he had placed that Memoir in my hands, for he has frequently asked me for it, unabashed by my repeated assurances that he had made a mistake. It is quite true that he did place certain papers in my hands on his return from France after the event alluded to, and being not very conversant in the French language, it is possible he may have believed it to be the Memoir in question. But it would make you smile were you to see the paper which he really did deposit with me. I must request you to enjoy the joke exclusively *yourself*, or at least not to let Mrs. Hughes participate in one so perfectly unfit for a Lady's eyes, ears, or most secret thoughts. The *fact*, however, is that the Roll of papers selected by the Revd. and learned Doctor from the heaps of documents which I believe were knee-deep in the Courts of the old Bastille when he was there, and which

From the ruined bastille

he gave me believing them to be the modest Memoirs of an honest family, turns out to contain the secret and most palpably, plainly-written *journal* of about a week's proceedings in a French House of Ill Fame ! and transmitted by the keeper of it to the Ministry of the Police for inspection ! ! These, probably, when they had done their office, had been lodged with volumes of other documents in the Archives of this Prison, and found their way, most fortunately, altho' most unaccountably, into the hands of an English Doctor of Divinity ! Probably some one else has got the Memoir you are enquiring after. If so, that person was destined to receive the present which my good friend unwittingly made me. I confess I am very anxious to find out who the person was, and of what sex, for whom the precious relics in my possession were intended by my Reverend Friend. I have now in strict confidence told you all I know about the Gabell Manuscripts. I would not for the world that the Author of *Waverley* should hear the Story, because I am sure that he would interweave it into one of his Legends, but with you I am sure it is safe. With the greatest admiration and esteem,

In strict confidence

Buckingham and Chandos.

AN OLD CHARGE AGAINST DEAN SWIFT

The literary halo round Dean Swift is now supposed to be undimmed by the shadow of the old scandals about him. This letter does not contribute to the removal of that shadow. On the contrary it supplies some corroborative evidence which Scott evidently thought would be valuable to a future editor of Swift, and so he preserved it, with another letter from a different source that substantiates this one.

From Dean Allot

Lausanne, Switzerland,
Feby. 2d., 1826.

Sir,—I am not without Apprehensions that, not having the Honor of being known to you, I may be considered to have taken an improper Liberty in encroaching on your valuable Time by addressing to you this Letter : but I trust I shall be forgiven, when it is considered that my only Motive is to afford you Information on a Subject which formerly engaged your Attention, and which you have deemed worthy of Investigation.

Delighted as I have been for many Years past with the Perusal of your various Works, it was not until yesterday that I met with your *Life* of Swift which Galliagni [*sic*] has published at Paris, distinct from your Edition of Swift's Works. The Perusal of it brought to my Recollection an Occurrence which I shall here relate ;

and which militates strongly against the principal Argument, urged by the Friends of Swift against the Charge of his Delinquency when Prebendary of Kilroot, as stated by the Editor of the new Edition of the "Tatler."

In 1767 I was presented to the living of Killashee in the county of Longford and Kingdom of Ireland; and in the following Year, Dean Dobbs was presented to the adjoining Parish of Clongesh. We were very intimate, and being on a Visit at the Dean's, he shewed me a Poem which had been written by some Friend of Serjeant Bettesworth's in Answer to the Poem in which Swift had spoken contemptuously of the Serjeant. These *Verses* were severe on Swift; and, among other Charges of Misconduct, alluded to his Incontinency at Kilroot. In a Note on the Passage, it was stated expressly that He had been obliged to quit the County of Antrim, and resign his Prebend of Kilroot in that County, in Consequence of being charged with having committed a Rape.

Being surprised at this Accusation, I asked Dean Dobbs (who had formerly been Prebendary of Kilroot) whether he had ever heard of such a charge. The Dean replied that he had not; but suggested that as his Father Dr. Dobbs (who had formerly been Fellow of the College of Dublin) was then in the House, who was nearly fourscore years of age, and having lived great part of his Life in the Neighbourhood of Kilroot, would probably know whether there were any grounds for the Accusation, it would not be amiss to ask him. We accordingly went immediately to Dr. Dobbs, shewed him the Verses, and asked him whether He had ever heard of such a Charge being made against Swift. His answer, I perfectly remember, was in these Words: "Whether the Charge was well founded or no, I know not: but it is certain that Swift was accused of the Rape; for the Examinations were sworn before my Father, who lived then at Castle Dobbs, from whom I had the Information, and who told me that Swift left the County in Consequence thereof."

Swift obliged to flee

To the best of my Recollection, it was about the Year 1771 that I had this Conversation with Dr. Dobbs.

Now the Existence of this Copy of Verses, with the annexed Note which I certainly saw as above stated, must have been written by some Friend of Serjeant Bettesworth when the Recollection of Swift's Attack on the Serjeant was fresh in their Memory: and is therefore a decisive Answer to the Argument used by Swift's Friends "that had such a criminal Stigma ever stained the character of Swift, some allusions to it must have been found amid the Pro-

fusion of personal Slander with which he was assailed at one Time, both in Britain and Ireland." This Statement also clears the Memory of the Rev. Mr. P——r of being the Fabricator of the story.

Unless there be positive Proof, that Swift " returned to Kilroot after his Resignation, and inducted his Successor in the Face of the Church and the Public," I should doubt the Fact ; because the Usage in Ireland is, when a Prebendary is to be installed, that the Mandate is directed to the Dean, or one of the Chapters ; and if a Clerk is to be inducted into a Benefice, the Mandate is directed to the Archdeacon, or some Beneficed Clergyman in the Diocese. Swift at the Time was neither one nor other. . . Your obedt. Servant,

RICH^{D}. ALLOT, DEAN OF RAPHOE.

A STORY OF BONNY PRINCE CHARLIE

ROBERT CHAMBERS not only introduced pretty girls and his own merits to Scott (see his letter, page 240), but also was zealous in assisting the Author of *Waverley*. Here is a story, hitherto preserved by word of mouth, of Bonny Prince Charlie, though for once not so bonnily to the credit of that hero. It came too late for Chambers to use when he brought out his clever book of the '45, as Scott deemed it. And apparently too late for Sir Walter—hence its inclusion here.

From Robert Chambers

HANOVER STREET,
EDIN : Sept. 23, 1828.

SIR,—The proverb that the King's errant may come in the cadger's road is frequently exemplified in the researches of literary antiquaries, that you will have no objection to receive a contribution from your humble friend the author of the *Traditions of Edinburgh* ; while the obligations under which you have at various times laid that individual make it quite proper that he should do every thing in his power to do you service in his turn. Without further preamble, the following anecdote, which I received from Mr. Grant, W.S. Edinburgh, nephew of the person concerned, and which may possibly appear to you fit for insertion in your new series of the delightful *Tales of a Grandfather*, is very much at your service. I would have put it into my own book, if I had got it in time.

You are aware, perhaps, that Grant of Glenmorriston only arrived at Holyrood House to join Prince Charles with his clan on the evening of the second day before the battle of Prestonpans. With the ardour so characteristic of his countrymen at that heart-stirring period, this brave man had made all the haste he could in marching towards the insurgent camp, being extremely anxious

to share in the conflict which he knew must soon take place between Charles and General Cope. He had that morning made a long march through Fife, crossed the Firth of Forth at Kinghorn, and immediately hastened up from Leith to Holyrood House, to present his sword, his troth, and his little band of clansmen (130) to the prince of his heart. Perhaps, his personal appearance, after such a march, was not exactly such as might have suited the air of a legitimate and gazettable court; but, in that of Prince Charles Stuart, an adventurer who might as yet be supposed anxious rather to see men than clothes, he never imagined that any objection could be made to him on that account. With a soul bent only on the main object of his enterprise, he waited not a moment in the court-yard except to draw up his men in rank, he rushed up the stairs, he hastily commanded his name to be announced, and at once he was ushered into the presence-chamber of Prince Charles. The gay young Chevalier went up as a matter of course, to embrace his new adherent; and he had almost thrown his arms round the neck of Glenmorriston, when, most unfortunately, observing his travel-worn appearance, he withheld himself, and was content to say to the chieftain, that he believed it would be advisable for him "to retire and trim his beard." The pride of the Highlander was at once roused by this unfortunate expression, and ardour of the partizan as effectually chilled. He half stamped his foot with indignation, and, as he turned to leave the room, he exclaimed, as he surveyed the Prince's smooth and handsome face, his eye beaming with irrepressible rage and scorn: "Let me tell you, Sir; it is not beardless boys who are to do your business!"

A rebuke for the Prince

Perhaps, however, this story is after all only piper's news to you; as I remember hearing you once quote Grant of Glenmorriston as one of your own acquaintances. If this should be the case, I hope you will at least allow that I have "saved baith my meat and my mense."—I have the honor to be, dear and venerated sir, your obliged and most humble servant,

R. CHAMBERS.

WHY HE BLUSHED

"THE quantity of horns I have for the hall would furnish the whole world of cuckoldom," wrote Scott to Terry on the occasion of a new gift. He was constantly receiving all kinds of curiosities for his library and museum: a bit of Robert Bruce's coffin; Queen Mary's snuff-box; George III's night-shirt; ballads, books, and old prints—these were only a few of them. This amusing letter shall represent the donors of what is one of the sights for visitors to Abbotsford.

From James Usher

11, BROWN'S SQ., EDIN.,
13 Decem., 1828.

SIR,—I have learnt from the Judge of the Court of Admiralty that he has admitted me a procurator before that Court thro' your recommendation. I therefore feel myself bound to express my acknowledgement of your kindness to me in this instance.

I take the freedom to send you an Andrea Ferara as an addition to your Armoury which I hope you will accept. I know little of its legend further than that, according to my Grandfather, it came into his family at the time of " the troubles," by which I understood him to mean the year '15, when a Regiment of Fencibles was raised in the shires of Rox[burgh] and Selkirk, commanded by Ld. Jedburgh. . . My father, who does not understand the value of Andrea Feraras, would have converted it into an instrument for decapitating Turnips had I not fortunately rescued it from such an ignoble fate. Whatever may have been its former history I know not. But one thing I am sure of: since it became an heirloom of my family it cannot boast of having tasted of blood—the branch of the House of Nevill, to which I belong, having always been of an unwarlike character.

His father's sword

I know with certainty that it was out in the '45 on the following occasion. When the Prince's Army was on its march towards England, the inhabitants of Darnick [1] were in a state of great alarm, expecting every day to be devoured bodily by the savages of the north. The Elders of the village assembled to concert measures for the safety of the community. It was resolved that a watch should be stationed to give notice of the approach of the enemy. The enemy was one day descried on the road near Galashiels. A sudden panic seized the community: they fled in confusion (my ancestor amongst them, sword in hand—I blush to relate it) to Hallydean Hill, and their fears were only dispelled on discovering that the enemy were quadrupeds—a drove of black Cattle!

As you now occupy the possessions of my forefathers, it is right that you should have this sword to defend them in case of need, but I hope the time is distant when it will be necessary in defence of your property to smite with the sword. May you and your descendants enjoy your possessions in peace and happiness for many generations.—Your very obedient and humble Servant,

JAMES USHER.

[1] On the slope of the Eildons.

DOCUMENT sent (1828) by this association of young athletes, whose Poet Laureate, appropriately, was James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd. The Lord High Constable had the care of the King's person, and was in charge of tilts and tournaments.

THE SIX-FEETERS

Excerpt from a Meeting of the Scottish Six Feet Club Guard of Honour to the Lord High Constable

"It was farther resolved unanimously that Sir Walter Scott of Abbotsford, Baronet, being six feet in height and having obligingly expressed his concurrence with the resolution be, and he hereby is, elected an Honorary Member and appointed Umpire and Referee for life at all the Gymnastic Competitions and Exercises of the Club and in all its affairs when any difference of opinion shall make it necessary to consult him."

"INSIDE" INFORMATION FOR ANGLERS

ONE of Scott's correspondents, writing in appreciation of the author's paper on *Salmonia*, tells this fishing story: "Dr. W. took late in life to fly-fishing. Going out one morning he hooked himself in the lip; but rather than go back to the village, he fished till evening, when the apothecary cut it out." The following letter, from one expert angler to another, involves deeper—though perhaps equally painful—issues.

From G. Wishart

FISH HOUSE,
26th March, 1829.

DEAR SIR,—Agreeable to your request, I will send you some particulars respecting the Salmon fishing. I shall not say much respecting the spawn of salmon and their progress, as there have been innumerable arguments on that subject. A gentleman once called on me here, who pretended to know more about Salmon and fishing than all other men. He went as far as to say that he could take the spawn from the belly of a Salmon, after it had been killed, and bring them to perfection. I did not relish his conversation, and left him as soon as decency would permit. Sometime after, I was in the country where he lived, and enquired of an acquaintance of mine if he knew such a man, and what character he was of? His answer was: the best description I can give of him is that he is a wise fool.

A few years ago I wrote a letter to a gentleman respecting a salmon that we killed here. It was 22 lb.; and, when cutting it up for salting, I observed the stomach much extended, which

induced me to see what it contained ; and to my surprise, I took out of it two full grown herring. This came to be a considerable argument, and some eminent fishers protested against the possibility that such a thing could be. However, a gentleman affirmed that he had seen and taken three full grown herring out of the belly of a Salmon, so it was decided in my favour.

I shall now give you a singular account of a trout, which I had from the gentleman who killed it. We were walking by the side of a little brook or beck, as it is termed in Cumberland where it happened. The gentleman observed that he had killed a number of trouts there with the rod, and one in particular which, when he had killed it, might be 1½ lb. weight. On taking it home and observing its stomach, or maw, considerably extended and opening it, he took a full grown *mouse* out of it. He could not say whether the trout had caught the mouse alive or after it was dead. A great part of the hair was off it, indicating that it had been in the stomach some time. As this is a true and original account you are at liberty to make it known to whom and in what way you please, and if any person doubts the veracity of the assertion, the gentleman's oath on the subject is as ready as his word.

A mouse in a trout

I come now to speak of the Quarter fishing, that is, at the first and last quarters of the moon, which—during the whole of my experience of forty years—have always been more productive than at any other time of the moon. When I was fishing in Annandale, and work on the farm was pressing, and Salmon scarce, we were not particular in attending the nets so very closely, but when quarter day came every fisher was on the alert ; and it was nothing uncommon for the run of salmon to be a tide before the quarter, according to the Almanack, and sometimes a tide after it : but mostly on the very day. When I was a boy the oldest fishers in the country at that time often told me that they had studied quarter day since their first commencement of fishing, and it is evident that the same has been known in other places as well as in Annandale.

A Gentleman in Dumfries with whom I was intimately acquainted, having bought a considerable extent of the river Nith (with him I was fishing one season) there was then a reserve of the quarter fishing, being the property of another person and in that part was occupied every Thursday. This part of the Fishery was taken in lease by two men in Dumfries, and they would persuade themselves that they had a right to the quarter of the fishing and

would occupy it every fourth day. This caused a commencement of a law suit which cost a very considerable sum of money, and they were completely foiled in their attempt, as it was the quarter fishing they had to occupy, and not the quarter of the fishing—[it] being fully proven by a number of Witnesses, that the quarter fishing and the quarter of the fishing were two different terms. In respect to the first or last quarter of the moon I have known little or no difference in the fishing, and at the change or full of the Moon I never observed them plentier or scarcer than any other regular fishing time.

If I should pretend to give you my reasons for what I have written and those the most substantial, I have no doubt but they would immediately be contradicted. So you may call in the Astrologers, the Magicians, the Soothsayers, the Chaldeans, and all the wise men, and the whole of them cannot trace the progress of the Salmon itself—without taking notice of any other kind of fish. There are some people who pretend to know everything concerning the salmon, from the spawn till it is at full maturity of twenty or thirty pounds weight. These pretenders, in fact, know no more than you do yourself: and that is, you know that they are young before they are old.

What anglers know

I shall now draw to a close, and if there is any hint that I can give you on the subject, you may command me at any time.—I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

G. Wishart.

MRS. HUGHES ON THE TRAIL AGAIN

Mrs. Hughes, all out on the Jacobite trail, makes this pretty contribution to the Letter-Books. It is curious how frequently Scott's correspondents refer to his Jacobitism in the finger-to-lip way we see here.

From Mrs. M. A. Hughes Sept. 5th, [1829].

My Dear Sir Walter,—You will wish me at the "muckle deil" for plaguing you so, but I have had a little more news of Sir H. Lee's picture, and as I can send it free as far as Edinburgh I will give it. I cannot doubt that the portrait in Wales is a facsimile of the celebrated portrait of Sir Henry Lee which is at Ditchling near Woodstock; and *that* is the likeness of Sir H. Lee's Ancestor of the Litchfield family and Master of the Armour to Queen Elizabeth. He is mentioned in Walpole's Antiquities as having made a vow to present himself annually at the Tilt armed, there to perform in honor

of the Queen's accession. Becoming old, he resigned his office with great pomp to the Earl of Cumberland. You, who read every thing and remember every thing, have most likely a recollection of the verses he presented to Elizabeth on this occasion; but should they have escaped your eagle research, they are too pretty not to communicate—

My golden locks time hath to silver turn'd;
(Oh! time too swift, and swiftness never ceasing!)
My youth 'gainst age, and age at youth hath spurn'd,
But spurn'd in vaine—youth waineth by encreasing;
Beauty, strength, and youth flowers fading beene;
Duty faith and love are rootes, and ever greene.

My helmet now shall make a hive for bees,
And lovers' songs shall turne to holy psalmes;
A man-at-arms must now sit on his knees
And feed on pray'rs that are old ages almes.
And so from Court to cottage I depart,
My saint is sure of my unspotted heart.

And when I sadly sit in holy cell
I'll teach my swaines this Carol for a song,—
Blest be the hearts that wish my sovereign well,
Curst be the soules that thinke to do her wrong!
Goddesse! vouchsafe this aged man his right,
To be your Beadsman that was once your knight.[1]

This Sir Henry must have been Grandfather to *yours*, but they're worthy of each other, only it is very strange that the dog in the picture is what the people here call the "very Moral" of the noble Bevis.

When I wrote from Rainow I forgot to tell you that Sir R. Vaughan is as staunch a Jacobite as myself and somebody else who shall be nameless, and nobody must name the word *Pretender* in his presence. He has it by inheritance, for his Ancestors were staunch from the '15 and members of The Cycle, a weekly dinner kept up for more than a hundred years in Wales by the Squires of the same politics. There they met, and bareheaded and barekneed drunk *the* King (you may guess who) "no Hanover rats"—"no Turnip-hoers"—"the little gentleman in the black velvet coat," and other toasts which you wot of. His father joined the Chevalier at Preston, and obtained a commission in his army. On the retreat from Derby and in the dispersion Mr. Vaughan was taken near Preston on suspicion. He affected perfect self-possession, but did not resist. He was taken by a serjeant to a small inn in Preston,

[1] Mrs. Hughes's letter is interesting for its historical notes. The delightful verses appeared at the end of George Peele's *Polyhymnia* (1590), though there are many variations. I have revised the above after that given by Dyce in his note to *Polyhymnia*.

where he complained of cold and begged for a little fire. When this was granted, he desired the serjeant to retire to the other side of the door while he changed his wet clothes. The moment this was granted he burnt his pocket-book containing his commission and some letters which would have hanged him and implicated his whole family and many other Welch gentry.—Adieu dear Sir Walter, ever your affectionately attached friend,

M. A. HUGHES.

SCOTT KILLS AN OLD FRIEND

MOST novelists find it advisable to kill off their inconvenient characters ; but Sir Walter had a surprise when this letter informed him that he was the author of an old friend's death.

From the Rev. Patrick Graham MANSE OF ABERFOYLE,
31st Decr. 1829.

DEAR SIR WALTER,—The second Volume of the new edition of *Rob Roy* reached this remote spot two days ago ; and afforded a renewal of the pleasure which its first perusal excited, enhanced as it was by an intimate acquaintance with the localities and individual characters so strikingly pourtrayed in it, till in a note to p. 203 I lighted on the startling information that I have been dead some years. Though till now unconscious of this very material change in the scene and mode of my existence, I am far from questioning a fact stated on such high authority. As is often the case, my consciousness and my deference to testimony stand strangely opposed to each other. I scarcely know whether I am alive or dead, but the weight of evidence in favor of my death seems on the whole to preponderate, and to that I am bound as a sound reasoner to submit implicitly. Perhaps, indeed, like a well-known predecessor of my own, I have been only carried off by the Daoine Shie, in which case the unearthly being who now addresses you may be no more than a Fairy Changeling, left for a time to occupy the place of the departed Minister of Aberfoyle. At any rate the time and manner in which the intelligence reached me have given me the singular gratification of enjoying my own posthumous fame. To be praised by the Author of *Rob Roy* might well make any man proud, but to receive and read that praise so long after my death is what I believe no Mortal but myself would ever boast of. Still the pleasure this affords is attended with some inconvenience. My Daughter, stunned by the discovery, has hurried home from Glas-

High authority

gow to ascertain the circumstances of her Father's decease. My noble Patron is overwhelmed with letters from Celtic Divines of every patronymic detailing their claims and offering their services to supply the vacancy. The Presbytery of the bounds, considering the time which has elapsed, have held a meeting *pro re nata*, with a view to the exercise of their *jus devolutum*. And, worst of all, my old Servant Duncan, who has been in his day a Jack of all trades, and does not scruple to borrow an hour now and then from his sleep or his work—as it may happen—to spell the pages of a diverting story, insists on receiving a complete suit of decent mourning for his dear and good Master, for which demand he finds in the tale both a reason and a precedent.

Servant and story-teller

After all, I believe I must lay my death to your door; but as a dying Man, and much more a dead Man, is bound to forgive even the Author of his death, I beg leave to assure you of the unabated respect and regard with which I am, or should rather say I was, dear Sir Walter, your sincere Friend and warm admirer,

PAT. GRAHAM.

A GHOST STORY

NATURALLY the Abbotsford Letter-Books have their ghost stories. This is the best one, as told in all the comfortable expansiveness of the indefatigable Mrs. Hughes.

From Mrs. M. A. Hughes

AMEN CORNER,
Novr. 15th, 1830.

MY DEAR SIR WALTER,—I shall always be desirous to fulfil any wish of yours, and therefore I shall set down in order all the particulars I have heard of Mrs. Rickets's story. "I tell the tale that was told to me," remarking that it agrees in *every particular* with what I heard narrated by Mr. Strong, a respectable Welch clergyman, who having been Chaplain to Dr. Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph, many, *many* years ago, had had opportunities of hearing the legend as told in the neighbourhood. The Bishop had a house at Twyford, near Winchester, about twelve miles from the haunted house, which is (for I believe it is now in existence) situated between Alton and Alresford. The Duchess of Buckingham, to whom the story was familiar in childhood (for Avington is only four miles from Alresford), has exactly the same version. I must first premise that my story says that a Mr. Legge, related to Lord Stawell (a title I believe now extinct), was a very atrocious libertine: he was aided and abetted in all his evil practices by an old butler named Robin, who

was distinguished by a remarkably deep toned hoarse voice. Mrs. Legge was known to be very unhappy and very ill used, and was seldom seen by the neighbourhood, who were deterred from visiting at the house by the abandoned character of its master. But it became known that a younger sister of Mrs. Legge's came to visit her, and in process of time a criminal intercourse was suspected between her and her brother-in-law : a child was said to have been born, and destroyed by the agency of the butler. So far I am correct in my remembrance, but I am not clear as to the death and dispersion of the guilty trio. I *think*, however, that old Robin came to an untimely end, and that Mr. L. grew disgusted with the house and left it. Be that as it may, the house was to be let, and was hired by Captn. Ricketts for the reception of his family during his long absence from England, either on the East or West India station. Mrs. R. removed to her new residence, when her husband sailed, with three young children and a small establishment of servants. I do not precisely remember how long it was before her quiet was disturbed, but I *think* it was only a few days after her being settled, that she was sitting alone, about 9 in the evening, and was startled by the singular terror expressed by her favorite cat. The animal, started from her slumber on the hearth, made a pitious cry ; and after running about the room as if wishing to escape, darted to its mistress and rolled itself up in the train of her gown, where it lay panting and exhausted. Mrs. R. was rising to summon a servant when her ear was struck with a tremendous noise in the room overhead ; it had the sound of tearing up the floor with the utmost violence, and throwing the planks about. In a moment all the servants, alarmed by the uproar, rushed into the room, and Mrs. R., who was a woman of resolute spirit, headed the party to explore the room from which the sound appeared to proceed. But on entering nothing was to be seen, and the operations appeared to have shifted to another apartment. The whole house was searched without effect, and the noise continued a considerable time, varying its apparent station as it was approached. The next night the annoyance was renewed, and after the floor-breaking ceased, three voices were heard distinctly, that of a female and two males. One of these [was] so remarkably hoarse and dissonant that one of the servants, who was from the neighbourhood, exclaimed, it was just like the voice of wicked old Robin. The female seemed to plead in agony for some boon ; one of the men appeared to answer in a mournful grave tone ; and the deep-toned voice sounded

The wicked old butler

angrily and positively. No distinct words could be made out, but now and then the voices seemed so close that—as old Mrs. Gwynn, my informant, described—the listeners thought if they put out their hands they might have touched the speakers ; to this succeeded a strain of soft aerial music, and the whole ended by a number of dreadful and piercing shrieks, altogether occupying not less than half-an-hour. Next day the whole establishment gave warning, and were reluctantly dismissed by Mrs. R., who took the precaution of making them sign their names as witnesses to a short account which she noted in a book ; and in which she afterwards kept a regular journal of the transactions of each night—continuing the practice of making every servant she dismissed (and she seldom prevailed on any one to remain with her), as well as the few guests who took compassion on her forlorn state, sign their testimony to what they had *heard*, for nothing was ever *seen*. I am not sure whether these horrors were repeated every night, but certainly so frequently as to leave Mrs. R. no peace or quiet, and to produce agitations which considerably affected her health. She had been in this house more than a twelvemonth, when Mrs. Gwynn (from whom I heard the story) came to pay her a visit attended by her maid. Mrs. G. was much shocked at her friend's altered appearance, but had been inclined to think the accounts she had written had been exaggerated. However, when the usual period arrived the whole routine went on, and Mrs. G. was terrified to a degree which only made her remark in astonishment that Mrs. R. could have endured so much and so long : I remember her saying the first burst of noise was as loud as if three or four carpenters were employed. The whispering conversation often seemed close to her ear, and the soft music she compared to the tones produced by a then celebrated player (Cartwright) on the musical Glasses—the shrieks which closed the whole, so sharp as quite to rend the ear. I remember this comparison the more distinctly as I had been taken a few days before to hear the musical Glasses played on by Cartwright. Indeed every particular of Mrs. G.'s narrative is as vividly present to my memory as if I had only heard it an hour ago, and the frequent repetitions I have since heard from my two Aunts, who were auditors at the same time, have engraved every iota on my mind. Mrs. G., tho' scared sufficiently, would have remained the few days she had promised to stay, but her servant—a very faithful and valuable one—was rendered so ill by terror that she could not in common charity oblige her to remain after the second

Piercing shrieks

night, when a repetition ensued. She therefore pursued her journey, after having added her signature to the book, which she described as then containing many pages: I remember when my Aunt asked her whether Mrs. R. would publish this book, she replied that should her friend outlive Sr John Jarvis (as he then was) and Lord Carhampton, she believed it was her intention to do so. Mrs. R. died at a very advanced age, not many years ago.

Mrs. Gwynn then went on to relate the substance of the correspondence that occurred not long after she left her. The bedroom in which Mrs. Rickets slept was separated from the nursery by a wide passage, the doors of the two rooms being exactly opposite. Mrs. R. slept alone, but had a light burning in the hearth. One night, shortly after she had retired to rest, she heard a heavy foot leap, as it appeared to her, from the window seat, and walk slowly to the side of her bed, when it stopped. The curtain was drawn on that side, and she instantly threw herself out of the opposite side next the door, and—standing in the door way to prevent any one getting out—called loudly to the Nurse. The alarm was instantly given, and while the nurse joined her upon guard, the nursery maid summoned the rest of the servants. A strict search was then made in the apartment, but nothing could be discovered to account for the sound which had roused Mrs. R. Next day an old carpenter of the neighbourhood desired to speak to her and to mention a circumstance which had occurred during the residence of Mr. Legge. He said that he had been employed and well paid by old Robin, the butler, for a job which was done in his presence, and after every body else was asleep in the house. It was to take up a plank in one of the bedrooms, and saw away a joist so as to give room for a small deal box, about two feet long, which the old butler deposited under the floor; and then the carpenter restored the plank and joined it as well as he could. He said he had been sworn to secrecy, but the parties concerned being dead and gone he thought he might safely mention a thing he could not help believing might be concerned with the disturbances. Mrs. R. made him lead the way, and he went to her apartment and, lifting the carpet at the very spot where it appeared to her the heavy step paused, he shewed her the joining of the plank. By her desire it was taken up, and the joist—according to his account—was found removed, and an empty space remained sufficient to contain such a box as he described. If it *had* been there it was for only

Carpenter's evidence

temporary concealment, for no box was found : you may suppose what the box was believed to contain.

The only other event I recollect was the return of Sr J. Jarvis to England, and his visit to his sister, his grief at finding her in such a shattered state of health and nerves, and his determination that she should remove from a place where he was convinced foul play existed, and taking upon himself the risk of displeasing Captn. Rickets, who had expended a large sum in settling his family there, and whose apprehended displeasure had prevented his wife from taking the decided step of quitting a residence in which he had placed her. Sir John would not even suffer his sister to remain a single night longer, but removing her, her children, and every servant to a neighbouring farm, determined—with his friend Colonel Lutterell (afterwards Lord Carhampton)—to watch through the night and detect the imposture which he was well convinced had been so ably carried out. The ground floor consisted of a large hall and two parlours—one on either side. In these parlours the friends, well armed and lighted, stationed themselves, and at the usual time the noises began, and they both rushed into the hall—angrily accusing each other of an attempt to play a foolish trick. But as soon as they met they were aware the noise proceeded from the other quarters. The plank-tearing, the whispering, the soft music, the shrieks went on in the usual succession, and after an active search all over the house, they were compelled to acknowledge themselves baffled : Mrs. R. never again returned to the house except for a few mornings which were devoted to packing and preparing for the final removal. On one of these mornings she sat down to rest herself in the housekeeper's room, and her brother seated himself by her, leaning against a large press which had just been emptied of linen. They were both startled by a sound close to their ears, which she compared to that of dry bones rattling in a box. Sir John instantly threw open the door of the press, exclaiming—" The devil is here, and now we shall have him." However, nothing tangible appeared ; and this forms the last link of my chain.

Laying the ghost

In my former letter I told you from the authority of a young friend who saw much of Ld. St. Vincent in his latter days, how extremely angry he always was when the subject was alluded to, and Mrs. Gwynn said that Mrs. Rickets was ever averse to the discussion, tho' she never refused to answer any questions put to her. And now having told my tale I must protest my utter unbelief in any supernatural interference : had I written this in the first fifteen

[years] of my life I could have made no such declaration, for this story was the nightmare of my existence from the age of eleven, to that of discretion—if ever I have attained that happy period. But I consider it as one of the best planned and executed deceptions I ever heard of—for whatever purpose it might have been wrought, I do not believe the plot has ever been discovered, though the general idea is, I think, that it was to further the purpose of a gang of smugglers. I hope I shall not have an action brought against me for scandal raised against the Legge family, for aught that I *know* " all the men might be brave and all the women virtuous," and I am not singular in reviving ancient *tittle-tattle*. Townsend, the Bow-street celebrated Townsend, came into the Herald's office a short time ago; Mr. Barham a comical clever friend of ours (author of " The University we've got in town ") was there. He is well known to Townsend, who asked him if he could help him to any account of Sir Philip Sidney. Mr. B. concluded he meant to enquire about the King's son-in-law, and answered accordingly; and Townsend scornfully replied: " Pho! pho! I do not mean that chap—no, no, the man I want to know about was one that used to philander, some folks say worse, with Queen Elizabeth. . . Adieu, my dear Sir Walter, ever your truly obliged and attached Friend,

Bow-street Townsend

M. A. Hughes.

CONGREVE, THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH, AND THE OXFORD PAPERS

Here, in an important document sent to Scott, are new sidelights on the affair between the dramatist Congreve and the Duchess of Marlborough, and also of the adventures of the famous Oxford papers. The document is unsigned; but from the handwriting it can be assigned to Sir Walter's friend Lady Louisa Stuart, whose family connections and flair for letters endorse the authenticity of the notes. It should be added that the story of the Duchess making the image of Congreve is history.

In a letter to Swift concerning Congreve's death it is hinted that his life had been made uneasy by a certain lady's capricious humour. The note [1] calls this lady the Duchess of Marlborough, and observes that " we may judge of her temper from her diary." But the famous Sarah wrote the diary; the person here meant was her eldest daughter Henrietta, Duchess of Marlborough in her own right, wife of Lord Godolphin (the treasurer's son) and mother of a Lord Bland-

[1] This document in the Letter-Books is headed: " Notes upon the Notes in Mr. Scott's edition of Swift," hence the comment.

ford, who died before her, childless, and whose widow married Sir William Wyndham. Her caprice surpassed her mother's, if possible, and bordered upon something else. She showed her grief for Congreve by having his coat stuffed, clapping his wig on the top of it, and placing the figure every day at her table. He bequeathed her almost all he was worth, which she laid out in a diamond necklace for her youngest daughter, afterwards Duchess of Leeds. Dr. Johnson attacks Congreve for having passed over his relations, and left his money to this great lady out of ostentation. So do wise men moralize upon appearances! Congreve's contemporaries gave the matter a very different turn, and were far from thinking the Duchess of Leeds (at least) no relation to him.

An awkward question

The Duchess of Portland once borrowed her jewels to wear at a masquerade, and as they were examining them together, the other, taking up this massive necklace, asked her whether she could guess why the letters W. C. were engraved upon the back of every collet? "I have often puzzled myself to divine what could be my mother's meaning in it," said she, "do you think it was the name of the jeweller?" "Oh yes, it must have been so," replied the Duchess of Portland, well knowing the cypher meant William Congreve, and in a hurry to get rid of the subject.

This Duchess of Portland was the only child of Edward, second Earl of Oxford; and, by her mother, heiress of the Cavendish-Dukes of Newcastle. I have heard much from her of those rumours, which Mr. Scott mentions as prevailing, of letters written by the Duke of Marlborough that prevented the treasurer Oxford's trial, but as something more than rumours. The article quoted from the Biographia rests upon the evidence of a Benjamin West [1]; the last person who would tell the exact truth for reasons of his own. I always was told, as an undoubted fact notorious to all the friends of the Oxford family, that Lord Oxford had possession of *a* letter from the Duke to the Pretender, and previous to his trial sent the former word that he should be obliged to produce it in the course of his defence. Upon receiving this message, the Duke burst into tears: the first instance he was known to give of that weakness of nerves which afterwards increased to imbecility—

From Marlbro's eyes the streams of dotage flow.

His flying into rage and tearing off his wig (behaviour very

[1] This is a slip of the pen on the part of the writer, Lady Louisa Stuart. It should be James West, M.A., of Balliol College, Oxford, a noted collector of MSS., coins, and medals. Benjamin West was the American who became P.R.A.

unlike the habitual dignity of the man), made no part of my story. For " *The letter,*" as I used to hear it called, it was treasured up with the title-deeds of the Oxford estates ; and the Duchess affirmed that to her knowledge it was in existence and safety a short time before her father's death. After that, her mother, ignorant of business herself, left all the papers to the mercy of Mr. West, who, I believe, was one of Lord Oxford's executors, and managed everything for his widow. Presently he, the confidential friend and creature of the Harleys, was on a sudden brought into Parliament for St. Albans by Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough ; and the important paper never appeared above ground any more. His fortune, too, seemed augmented by unknown means, and it was believed he received a farther price of ten thousand pounds. He died in my memory, a rich and eminent person, President of the Royal Society, and his vast collection of curiosities, being sold by auction, produced one of those fashionable sales frequented by the whole town. I remember going to it with my mother more than once, and all the conversation which it gave rise to between her and the Duchess, who had a bargain going on with Mrs. West for the purchase of a quantity of the Oxford papers found in the hoards of the deceased. Mrs. West herself sent her word of this discovery, and offered her the refusal. The Duchess told us the news did not surprise her ; she knew that half her grandfather's papers were missing, and was at no loss to imagine which way they had gone. She had been informed by her father's old servants that, even before his funeral, while Lady Oxford remained shut up in her bedchamber Mr. West would be all day indefatigably rummaging in the paper-closet, and go away at night carrying off huge bundles of some sort under his great coat. They wondered, but durst not interfere, supposing he had authority for what he was doing, and before she knew it the time had passed by, and nothing could be done. She readily accepted Mrs. West's offer, only desiring to know precisely what the papers were ; and while they were negotiating and Miss West, the daughter, going backwards and forwards with messages between them, it came into *her* head one day to ask the Duchess a most unlucky question. " Pray Madam, has your Grace any notion how these papers belonging to your family happened to be in my father's possession ? For neither my mother nor I have been able to form the least conjecture." " I was struck dumb," said the Duchess, laughing : " To be sure I knew mighty well, but as I would not say to her ' Why Madam, your father was a

The papers come to light

rogue and a thief; he stole them, and deserved to be hanged for his pains,' I had nothing for it but to answer drily: 'Madam, it was a very extraordinary circumstance indeed.'"

The end of the business was as odd as the beginning. Mrs. West abruptly sent her grace "Compliments, and she would give her no more trouble, as she had sold the papers to Lord Shelburne" (afterwards Lansdowne). The Duchess was enraged at this usage; and justly thought Lord Shelburne's conduct very ungentleman-like also, in buying them, as it is phrased, *over her head*. But she had no remedy, and was forced to sit down contented.

The Duchess had herself often seen and read the identical letter.

SCOTT'S DISASTER, HIS GREAT RETRIEVAL, AND THE FINAL TRAGEDY

From Walter Scott, Jun. . Not cast down—His wife offers £14,000.

Mrs. J. G. Lockhart . Lockhart heartbroken—His troubles with Murray—Ready-made shirts at 4/6—J. G. L. takes pains to be agreeable.

Thomas Moore . . The general dismay over the disaster—Scott's rebounding power.

James Hogg. . . A sharp blow upon a grey head—Confidence in Scott's retrieval.

Joanna Baillie . . Recalls Sir Walter's prophetic fear—Abbotsford hospitality abused—An American remedy—Miss Edgeworth's industry.

John Gibson, Jun. . Tribute from Trustees for the Creditors—£500 for Scott—Offer of £11,025 for the *Life of Napoleon*—The Shylock.

From Robert Cadell . . Sees the position as a tradesman—Fear of Scott's ceasing work—The example of Miss Edgeworth—Popularity of the Waverley novels—By offers.

James Ballantyne . Appeal to Scott against Cadell—Three shipwrecked mariners—Danger of being ruined.

Robert Cadell . . Thankful that Scott refused a pension—Sends five gallons of whiskey.

[*The same*] . . . Reports Ballantyne's dissatisfaction with *Count Robert.*

[*The same*] . . . He is gloomy—Fearful that *Count Robert* may not be popular—Advises completion of the MS.—Wants a noble finish to the Waverley series.

J. G. Lockhart . . An important night in the House of Lords—The gay world and its blown-up boobies—Wishes *Count Robert* was published.

James Ballantyne . Thinks that both he and Scott might join a Temperance Society.

[*The same*] . . . Apology for previous letter—Disclaims intention of converting Scott to temperance.

From J. G. Lockhart . . Another Scott book—Welcomes a second *Malachi Malagrowther.*

Robert Cadell . . Dissatisfaction over the end of *Count Robert*—The cost of its non-success.

[*The same*] . . . Deplores the *Malagrowther* book—Wants to postpone its publication.

[*The same*] . . . Scott must not be faint-hearted about *Count Robert*—But it must be castrated.

Walter Scott, Jun. . Hope for 1833—Does not wish Scott's library broken up, or Abbotsford altered—Offers to buy it for the family.

SCOTT'S DISASTER, HIS GREAT RETRIEVAL, AND THE FINAL TRAGEDY

"WHAT a life mine has been," confides Scott to his Diary in the hour of disaster, ". . . undervalued . . . getting forward . . . broken-hearted . . . rich and poor four or five times; once on the verge of ruin, yet opened a new source of wealth almost overflowing. Now to be broken in my pitch of pride. . . What is to be the end of it? God knows. . ." The end—or rather the tragedy of the approaching end—is seen in the light of the following letters to have been even grimmer than Lockhart's well-known story revealed it. The men about that lonely heroic figure appear rather less brilliantly in the new light.

Scott's reference to being rich and poor four or five times concerns, it needs hardly be said, his secret association with the Ballantynes as printers and publishers. It started before 1800—before he became the world's poet, and then the world's most popular novelist; and for a quarter of a century it was heaping up troubles not less proportionate to his success and to his ambitions of family and estate. Then, by that usual trick of Fate which combines all untoward chances at one evil moment, he was brought to ruin, and faced with debts to the extent of £130,000. How he refused to repudiate a penny of it; how, in a superhuman effort, he wrote himself to death in order to repay the debt of honour—and magnificently succeeded—is undying history. Could his poems of chivalry go unechoed; could the Waverley novels be forgotten by a busier world with its growing wealth of romances—even without these Sir Walter Scott would live as the very gallant knight of literature.

James Ballantyne, the printer, was encouraged by Scott to set up business in Edinburgh, and financed by him from the first. The troubles of the secret partners began early, largely because Scott's "generous feelings for other men of letters . . . combined to hurry him and his friends into a multitude of arrangements the results of which were often extremely embarrassing, and ultimately

. . . all but disastrous." The admission is Lockhart's, and is important. John Ballantyne, the younger brother, tripped gaily into the scene later; and departed from it first, bequeathing to his beloved Scott £2,000 that he did not possess, and with equal optimism leaving his counting-house insolvent. James, however, was more than a printer: he was Sir Walter's reader of manuscripts and confidential critic. As such he had high and abundant testimonials from the author; and had this "Tom Tell-Truth" only been as good a commercial partner, the tale would be different telling. Crisis followed crisis; Scott's works supplied the relieving capital —until the commercial failures of 1825 brought ruin to both.

After the disaster and the tragedy of Scott came the judgment day—with Lockhart adopting the role of judge, and his *Life* of Sir Walter for a court. The Ballantyne family immediately appealed against the damning verdict of the biographer; and the evidence has since been reviewed times out of number by such additional judges as Fenimore Cooper, Charles Dickens, R. L. Stevenson, Professor Saintsbury, and Andrew Lang. The complexities of the business, its secret labyrinths, and curious personalities, form a jig-saw puzzle that, in spite of the able hands and research, never has been completely put together. Lockhart's *Life* of Scott is a fine work; but it would have been finer still if his judgment of the Ballantynes in regard to their responsibility for the disaster had been less spiteful and more judicious. I have been at least as bewildered as the earlier investigators by the amazing involutions of the affair. But after a later consideration of the facts and in the light of the unpublished material in Sir Walter's Letter-Books, I have come unhesitatingly to these two conclusions: first, that Scott would have deplored Lockhart's savage mauling of the Ballantynes; second, that the biographer erred gravely in relying so implicitly on the prejudiced evidence of Robert Cadell. This shrewd tradesman—who if he did well for Scott, as publisher, did even better for himself, and died a wealthy man—tried hard to oust James Ballantyne, of whom Scott wrote to Lockhart as late as 1830 (it seems almost a plea in anticipation of the biographer's summing up) that "he had been far from suffering by him. I owe it to him [*i.e.*, James Ballantyne] to say that his difficulties, as well as his advantages, are owing to me." Cadell tried in vain: the shipwrecked Scott would not push his friend "off the plank," as he assures him in one of these letters. And when the two finally escaped their troubled sea of ink, and proofs, accommodation bills, and creditors' dividends, it was Robert Cadell who fed the flame of

Lockhart's bitterness into the fierce blaze of the attack on the Ballantynes.

The correspondence following is divided into two groups. In the first are letters to Scott when news of his ruin is known. They are from his elder son and from his elder daughter Sophia (Lockhart's wife), with three others that may stand for the nation's concern; the next (from Gibson) introducing our Shylock. The second group's *dramatis personæ* are Scott, Cadell, Ballantyne, and Lockhart: their letters tell of the closing scenes, in which the tragedy has its usual comic interlude when Ballantyne (of all men!) made a suggestion that must have dropped like a thunderbolt into Abbotsford.

From Walter Scott, Jun.

DUBLIN,
27th Jany. [1826].

DEAR PAPA,—You tell me not to be cast down for the loss of world's gear. It is an unnecessary piece of advice, as I am rather glad—that is to say, I rejoice, *with grumbling*, that it has given Jane and I an opportunity of shewing you that we are not very ungratefull for all your kindness.

Jane and Walter to the rescue

I think there is a good deal of Jane's money vested in the funds, she says to the amount of 14,000£ or more. Now that money shall forthwith be sold out and put into your hands, and you shall pay us the lawfull interest upon it, at such times as may best suit yourself. Upon Mr. Carpenter's legacy two or three thousand might be raised, and if [it] came to the worst—*viz.*, that land must be sold, why then Lochore will go first, and that will keep us all smooth. I spoke to Jane about it, and she is quite ready to do anything that may be for the best. I would have made you this offer before, but in your last letter I thought that the storm had blown over, and it would have been a very unnecessary thing to offer what was then of no use. Now that I have done so I shall *feel very sore* if you refuse to accept that which will be of no great value to us, as we shall always look to you for the interest of *l'argent*. If you can give me an early answer I should like it, as then the proper arrangements should be instantly made, and if necessary I would get a week's leave and attend to it in person.[1]

[1] "God Almighty forbid!—that were too unnatural in me to accept, though dutiful and affectionate in them to offer," was Scott's comment in his Journal on this letter. Jane, Walter's wife, was "the pretty heiress of Lochore." Scott's increase of his landed estates contributed to the financial disaster. His affairs were then put into the hands of trustees, on the plan that he should be left in possession of Abbotsford, but should part with all his other property and pay the remainder of the £130,000 debt by his literary labours.

I shall get my step myself if we are ordered to India. I believe that I shall then be Senior Captain, as none of those above me think of going, and that step will give me more pleasure than all the rest put beside, as I shall have earned it myself. Two years absence would be sufficient.

I shall say nothing of the gaieties here as your time is probably too fully and disagreeably occupied to make any such intelligence interesting. You wrote me a letter from the Court of Session: I write this as prosecutor on a Court Martial which is going on against a scamp in my troop who is looking rather blue at this present moment. Jane joins me in love to all.—I remain, your affect. Son,

WALTER SCOTT.

[P.S.] I have got a transcript of an unpublished letter of Swift's which has been given me for you. I shall send it by a private hand.

From Mrs. J. G. Lockhart

25, PALL MALL,
February 1st, [1826].

MY DEAR PAPA,—It is needless to say what we both have felt for what has happened, but our regrets were comparatively nothing till we got your last letter detailing your plans. I cannot think of the separation between Mamma, Anne and yourself with the least comfort, and Lockhart is quite heartbroken when he thinks how well we might have done living together were we but home.[1] But regrets are useless for the present, and we must just trust that brighter days are in store. All I can do then now, my dearest Papa, is give you as little anxiety and trouble as I can by attending to every lesson you have formerly given me, particularly to the contents of your last kind letter written when you must have had so many things to think of besides me.

Lockhart heartbroken

I am very sorry indeed not to be able to give you very good news of our concerns here: the "Quarterly" goes on of course as well as possible, and gives no trouble: but the Newspaper,[2] though its sale has been most extensive, is like all new schemes—deficient in its internal arrangements, the Editor, Printer etc. not being up to their trade and of course everything and everybody flying in

[1] Lady Scott and Anne, the younger daughter, stayed at Abbotsford; and Scott went into rooms in Edinburgh—his town house there having gone for the creditors. "I propose to slam the door in the face of all and sundry for these three years to come, and neither eat nor give to eat," wrote Scott to Lady Davy in grim jest, as he settled down to his herculean task.

[2] The "Representative," see page 147.

COLONEL SIR WALTER SCOTT, 2ND BARONET

From the painting by Sir William Allan, R.A., at Abbotsford.

their distress to Lockhart, who has been harassed and annoyed beyond description, and told Murray that he must give it up altogether, as all he ever engaged to do was to send a literary notice or any other article each day and not to have anything else to do with it, whereas now night and day he was applied to. Murray behaved as well as possible, and declared that was the very utmost he expected or wished from him, and he was determined to turn off all non-efficient hands instantly and put in proper people. The correspondence is perfect, but the fault seems to have been beginning such an undertaking before their own Printing office and establishment is ready to receive them. I hope and expect a few days will bring this all in order, and that Lockhart will be able to write you a comfortable letter. If Murray would—and he seems to have got a fright—but keep sober for a few days and [? rest] all would do well, but the worst is when alarmed he takes to his bottle at night, which makes a perfect coward of him the following day.[1] Nothing can be better than his behaviour to us in every respect. I am sure it will please you to hear we have been most prudent with regard to money matters since we came here, so that whatever happens we will not have the self reproach of spending foolishly. From the first I determined against a carriage till we see how we get on. We pay our household accounts every week, and I am proof against every temptation till I have the money in hand. Johnny is well, and though he walks very feebly Mr. Shaw, who saw him yesterday, declares it is quite impossible that any thing can be going wrong with the back from his complete freedom of movement he has there ; that the stays make it appear worse than it really is ; and that it is of not the least consequence but will go off gradually. We bath his limbs at night in warm salt and water which he delights in. Little Walter bids me say he will sail about the 20th of this month, and that his equipment including passage will require as near as he can judge 220*£*. Most of the things are ready, and seem to me as moderate as possible. Shirts ready-made 4*s*. 6*d*. a piece. Lockhart has the very greatest comfort in Mr.

Albemarle Street troubles

[1] This report savours too much of Lockhart (see page 147 and note). Lt.-Col. John Murray, D.S.O., the great-grandson of the publisher, and present head of the firm, writes to me with reference to this and the previous passage : "It is well known that J. M. had a very violent temper ; but as far as I know he was not specially addicted to the bottle. At any rate, not worse than others of his day. In one of the early diaries of Cavour there is an amusing account of a Dinner-Party here [*i.e.*, 50 Albemarle Street]. The ladies left the room early ; and the men stayed on for over two hours over the wine. Cavour says that at the beginning he could talk his native Italian and a smattering of English ; but at the end he found it difficult to talk any language at all ! ! "

Hogg,[1] who is the most gentle modest creature I ever saw and most useful, being a capital scholar. Every body here has been as civil as possible, though you may believe we have had little heart to enjoy the attention of strangers for some time. They seem to think Lockhart a very tolerable lion, and he really takes pains to make himself agreeable in society, and does speak. Affect. love to Anne and Mamma from us all here. . . . And believe me, dear Papa, to remain your affectionate daughter,

C. Sophia Lockhart.

From Thomas Moore

SLOPERTON COTTAGE,
DEVIZES. [Feb. 1826].

My Dear Scott,—I have been doubting for some weeks past whether I should write to you; and yet, I don't see why I should have doubted, for the hearty sympathy of a friend can never come amiss, and mine, I assure you, goes along with you most thoroughly and sincerely. Indeed, I sometimes now almost regret my visit to you, as—if I had not seen, so closely and intimately, all you were worth—I should but have shared in the general concern at what has happened, and been spared the real pain with which my *knowledge* of you makes me view what has befallen you. That you bear it well I have no doubt. There is a rebounding power on such occasions, even in ordinary spirits, which makes the blow seem lighter to them who suffer than to those who feel for them; and then for *you* who spin gold from your entrails, there is, to be sure, every hope of a speedy retrieval. But still, the calamity is a severe one; and to any one but yourself I would croak over it for hours.

The gold-spinner

My hesitation about writing to you was put an end to some days since by the receipt of a most splendid present from you and Constable, which, I felt, gave me a right to break in upon your time, and to make you listen at once both to my gratitude and my regrets. This valuable gift had lain in the Longman's hands for some time, and it was only last week that I received it. To yourself I must trust for imagining all I feel at the possession of such a treasure from your own hands; and to Constable I cannot do better than send my thanks through *you*, with the addition of whatever you think most likely to convey to him my deep concern for his late calamity.

Pray give my best remembrances to Miss Scott (who, I hope,

[1] A nephew of the Ettrick Shepherd, formerly in Ballantyne's office, and now apparently employed by Lockhart.

received through Shaw the song I sent her), and believe me, my dear Scott, with a heart full of more than I venture to express to you,—Yours very faithfully,

T. MOORE.[1]

From James Hogg

ALTRIVE LAKE,
March 4th, 1826.

DEAR SIR WALTER,—. . . Did it not look so like affectation, sheer selfishness, or apathy, I could not mention the business of which the country's feelings of regret appear to be uniform—namely, your grievous involvement with the house of Constable and Co. It is a sharp blow upon a grey head—but far from being a deadly one, as I know, that head will rise with increased dignity above the rubbish of a fallen house the walls of which were only paper. The world has tried to depress you several times already, but from every one [of] its attempts you mounted with redoubled splendor:

An' sae will we yet,
An' sae will we yet;
When we fell we ay got up again,
An' sae will we yet.

I remain, dear Sir Walter, Your ever affectionate servant,

JAMES HOGG.[2]

From Joanna Baillie

HAMPSTEAD,
March 27th, 1826.

MY DEAR SIR WALTER,—I sent you a kind message thro' Mrs. Lockhart some time ago; I hope it has been received, for I would not then trouble with a letter, knowing well that my not writing would not be considered as a mark of indifference. Not to be interested in every thing that materially concerns you and yours would be stupidity in the most ordinary person in the kingdom, and in me it would be heartless ingratitude. You may guess then how pleased I am at the good report I have had from various quarters of your health and spirits. It makes me both pleased and proud. For though this commercial hurricane which has been felt over the whole country so generally and severely has beat upon your brow unsparingly, you are all in all such a one as almost any man

[1] Scott was very fond of "little Moore," who thrilled the early 19th century with *Lallah Rookh*, and scandalised it with *The Loves of the Angels*. "There is a manly frankness, and perfect ease and good breeding about him which is delightful," wrote Scott, who was not less esteemed by the biographer of Byron.

[2] This letter is reminiscent of the beautiful passages in the Ettrick Shepherd's *Domestic Manners of Sir Walter Scott*; it is also in great contradiction to the unhappy scandal and depreciation in that memoir.

in the Country would change places with gladly; and you have more than this to cheer you, for I believe that you receive the change which has taken place as part of your fortune, appointed for you by that hand from whom cometh every good thing in whatever form it may be clothed. Many years ago, in a letter to me, after mentioning gratefully the many happy circumstances that had attended your progress in life, you added: "I stand in awe of my own good fortune." That awe may now be removed, and having felt reverses like other men, you will afterwards be the happier for it. All this is well, and I think of it on your behalf with pleasure and, as I said before, with pride, but there is another view of the subject, or rather *part* of the subject, which gives me no satisfaction but on the contrary makes me, whenever I think of it, grumble and growl like an evil spirit; and that is the Multitude of impudent Travellers with letters of introduction from their as impudent friends who have abused your hospitable nature and made Abbotsford for so many Summers an Inn and a Tavern for wayfaring Idlers of all sexes and ages. I have no charity for such people. Travellers are the most selfish and the most impudent of human beings; and that you should have been their prey to such a degree provokes me, so that I must perforce give some vent to my humour. It is a curious coincidence that we should learn a few weeks since

President Jefferson

that the ex-president of Congress, the celebrated Jefferson, has applied to that Council for leave to dispose of all that remains of his once great property by lottery, and one of the principal reasons given for this is the great concourse of Travellers who went to visit him, &c., &c. So it is not without good reason. But I will not suffer myself to speak upon this subject any more; you are a good-humoured, open-handed, open-hearted Dandy Dinmont kind of a man, and I am a prudent, reserved, grave, ungracious kind of a woman, so we shall never come even now, perhaps, to a right agreement with one another. . .

Letters between me and Miss Edgeworth are few and far between; for tho' she writes night and day, sleeping and waking as you say in your last, a small part of the MSS. fall to my share. However, I know that a very reasonable portion of her good-will falls to my share, and for me to complain of correspondents is really like the pot calling the kettle black. From my good friend Miss Holford, to whose Italian Marquis you were so kind, I hear frequently. . . She is at her own home in Chester, still an Invalid and never expecting to be well, but not as formerly looking for

death at the end of a few weeks or months. She has had a great deal of anxiety on her Sister's account, who is married to Mr. T. Walker, one of the many London Bankers who have suffered in the late confusion and alarm, and there is a large family of children to whom their good Aunt is strongly attached. . . Your affectionate old friend,

J. BAILLIE.

From John Gibson, Jun.[1]

EDINBURGH,
9 Oct., 1826.

DEAR SIR WALTER,—I had this morning the honor of receiving your letter of yesterday, which I have laid before Mr. Jollie and Mr. Monypenny at a meeting we have had for the special purpose of considering it. In the first place we beg to tender the united expression of our very high admiration of the astonishing exertions which you have made, and are still making, for the benefit of the trust under our charges. In common with other men, we admire the inexhaustible fertility of that genius which has so often delighted us; but as your trustees we have opportunities, which others do not enjoy, of observing and duly appreciating the energy and magnanimity with which you have met the distressing exigencies of your situation. We receive with sincere gratification the announcement of another work, and cordially approve of the arrangement you have made for its sale and publication. In the circumstances we think your retention of the £500 highly reasonable. . .

We have agreed to accept Messrs. Longman and Co.'s offer of £11,025 for Napoleon.[2] Your opinion was decisive; and at any rate we all felt the offer was great, though the Publishers will, we hope and believe, be great gainers. Mr. Cowan must be consulted in the meantime. This however I trust is only a matter of form; and of course he will not make any objections to the price.

My short note of yesterday would put an end to your uncertainty about Abud: I believe he is now inclined to be reasonable.[3] At least he will not molest you. All the creditors who receive a dividend

[1] Sir Walter's private law-agent. He, with the Messrs. Jollie and Monypenny, W.S., were the trustees of Scott's affairs.

[2] *i.e.*, Scott's *Life of Napoleon*, nine volumes, produced in about twelve months "in the midst of pain, sorrow, and ruin." The price was for the edition of 6,000 copies inclusive of cost of production. From the close of 1825 to June 1827 his industry had reduced the debt by £28,000.

[3] The Shylock of our play, a Jewish bill-broker, who was the only creditor not to come into line and give Scott time to work, and who was constantly worrying the author and his trustees with threats of extreme measures. Sir William Forbes, the husband of Scott's first love, Williamina, surpassed all his efforts to help Sir Walter by privately paying the whole of Abud's demand of nearly £2,000.

under the trust will be barred from taking separate courses. I have the honor to be, dear Sir Walter, Your much obliged and faithful Servant,

JOHN GIBSON, JUN.

We should wish you to intimate, either directly to Longman, or through me (as most convenient for yourself), whether "Napoleon" shall be announced as by the Author of *Waverley* or Sir Walter Scott, and the sooner this is decided the better.

LAST PHASE: THE BITTER TRUTH

[The next group of letters takes us to the last phase of Scott's giant task. His publisher now is Robert Cadell, who had formerly been a partner in the publishing house of Archibald Constable, which, falling in the financial catastrophe of 1825, brought down with it the secret Scott-Ballantyne business. The first letter is that of the anxious "Tradesman"; and is significant for its driving of the willing but now weary horse. Following is a letter from James Ballantyne, the printer, making the plea to his friend that Cadell shall not be allowed to push him off their common plank. A few weeks later the astute publisher is conveying his satisfaction that Scott refused a Government pension to cover the difference between his late salary as a Clerk of Session and the pension of the office; and with his congratulations goes a supply of whisky. After this occurs the wrangling over the last productions of Scott's pen—the novel *Count Robert of Paris* (which, with *Castle Dangerous*, comprises the 4th series of his Tales of a Grandfather) and the Reform pamphlet—*i.e.*, the further epistle of *Malachi Malagrowther* (urging the reimposition of the Income Tax and attacking the Reform Bill). According to Lockhart, no one, except the sincere author, had any doubt about the undesirability of such a pamphlet; and he records that after an unpleasant scene between Scott, Cadell, and Ballantyne, in December of 1830, agreement was reached that it should only be published anonymously in Ballantyne's own newspaper, and not as a separate publication. But the fact Lockhart does not bring out is that, as we see here from his letter to Scott dated May 2, 1831, nearly six months later he urged that Sir Walter's pamphlet would have great effect and that it should be printed in both Edinburgh and London, preferably under Scott's own name. As for *Count Robert*, the *Life* makes it clear that Cadell and Ballantyne assured the novelist he had attached too much importance to their criticism (see letter of Dec. 6), and that he agreed to resume the novel (which neither of them ever expected would be finished) as a sort of consolation for the guillotining of *Malachi Malagrowther*. This was still in December 1830. "If we did wrong," Lockhart reports Cadell as saying, "we did it for the best"; and Lockhart adds his approval by commenting: "I hope there are not many men who would have acted otherwise in their painful situation." But how did they act? For the first nine months of the succeeding year the Letter-Books reveal the alternate criticizing and urging forward of the novel in a way that could only have been terribly harassing and distracting to poor Scott, already on the verge of the grave through overwork. Granted that the novel

shows decaying powers and that the political pamphlet advanced no new argument, it was little short of tragedy that the end of his unparalleled effort should have been subjected to such embarrassments. Nor could we wonder at it if Scott, in his secret heart, begged to be saved from the opportunism and interference of his friends.]

From Robert Cadell

EDINBURGH,
21 March, 1828.

DEAR SIR,—. . . You do me much honor by asking in your last kind note what your next work is to be, the *Fair Maid* being so nearly out of your hands.[1] It is not for me to say what you may consider the best subject to try—whether the continuation of *Quentin* or the return of Richard,[2] or perhaps some other Tale with so many of which your mind is stored. But I will say, *do not pause*, the more I consider this point I am the more convinced it may turn out a false step. I incline to *Quentin* or Richard.[2]

Scott urged on

At the present moment the enthusiasm in the public mind in favour of your writings, I do maintain is unabated, I see it as a Tradesman, and I hear it in all quarters ; no sooner is one book done, than we receive orders for the next, altho' not named ; and there is a universal cry : " if this work is not so good as its precurser, it is far beyond anything else." You have sometimes most pointedly adduced the fact that the number sold is less than formerly. I admit this, but it is only, I think, to be stated that up to this time 9000 sets of books have sold, to shew that the diminutions of the first edition is scarcely so great as one would expect.

With all submission, I have a dread that a pause risks the abatement of the public appetite for an interest in popular works. I may adduce the case of Miss Edgeworth : she, once the most popular writer of her day, is about to bring out a novel. I venture to say that the sale of it will be many thousands less than her last ; the excitement which her successive books produced has died away, many thousands are dead who admired her writings, a new generation has sprung up who do not know her works but from report ; she has to make her way anew with the reading public of the present day, and a very different day it is from that in which she flourished. The ordeal is greatly more severe ; she will now be reviewed before she is read—formerly she had only one or two criticisms altogether to encounter. But above all this, the public mind has taken a turn totally different ; it is supplied with food of

[1] *i.e.*, the *Fair Maid of Perth* (Chronicles of the Canongate : 2nd Series, 1828).
[2] *i.e.*, *Quentin Durward* (1823), or a sequel to *The Talisman*.

a higher order. I am confident this good lady will find the frost of pausing until the apetite [*sic*] has gone by.

I am afraid I tire you with my rigmarole, but let me assure you if there is enthusiasm in this country for your person and writing, it exists to a far greater extent on the Continent, particularly in Germany. I have for two days had the pleasure of conversing a good deal with Mr. Bowring who has been in Edinburgh for a short and hurried visit. He was in Germany a few weeks ago. So great is the run for the Novels throughout that country that one Bookseller assured him he had sold 10,000 sets at one shilling a Novel or 3d a volume, and that they print 40,000 and 50,000 at a time ! ! ! I think you will admit this to be very extraordinary ; it would be a great pity to damp this feeling by denying food to the good people.

In addition to what I have said, there is a fear that a pause arising from your over diffidence of your writing might make people fancy that the next work which may come after a considerable *Hiatus* is to be more finished and perfect than any of its precursors. I fancy they will find themselves mistaken in this, sure I am that the chances are rather against than in favour of this view.

But I fear you will find this a tedious letter. I shall conclude it by giving you a specimen of my opinion on the subject by a pledge to pay to you £4,200 for a Novel in 3 Vols. by next November, the same sum for one in April or May 1829, and a like sum for one in November of the same year, making £12,600 in 18 months—the number printed the same as at present. This may be thought bold, but I am so thoroughly convinced that the course is your own, that to leave it would be bad, if not fatal policy ; and that your collected works are benefited by your name and writings being as now so continuedly before the public. I repeat, I am so convinced of all this that I have no sort of alarm at the proposal I have just mooted. On the contrary, it would afford me no small pleasure to think that I have had some success in dispelling the diffidence you have of retaining the favor of the public.—Your very Humble and obliged Servant

Cadell's great offers

ROB. CADELL.

From James Ballantyne

P.O. [*i.e.*, PRINTING OFFICE],
EDINBR., Septr. 4, 1829.

DEAR SIR WALTER,—Several months since, I informed you of my belief that I had nothing to depend upon from Mr. Cadell, as manager of the Magnum, in the way of being employed in that work

any farther or longer than he felt compelled to employ me.[1] I said that I wished nothing to be done in the way of interference then ; but that when the time came, as I knew it would come, that my apprehensions were realised, I should then solicit your aid and support. Your answer was to assure me of your support, should that time come. " Do not doubt," you are kind enough to say, " that I will attend to you. I have told Mr. Cadell that we are like three mariners, escaping from a common shipwreck ; and as the plank is broad enough for all, I cannot think it right to push any off from it." Emboldened by this kindness, and respectfully reminding you that this is the very first time since the unfortunate month of January 1826 that I have ever intruded upon you a syllable respecting myself, I solicit your careful attention to the following brief statement.

The shipwrecked mariners

1. Previously to the commencement of the Magnum, we gave in Estimates for printing it. No. 1 was at 14/– per ream ; No. 2 at 12/–. No. 1, the highest, was adopted. Hot-pressing 1/6 p. ream.

2. The work was published ; the whole periodical press was loud in praise of the printing ; and the success has been unequalled. But Mr. Cadell was *not* satisfied ; and I submitted to charge only 12/– in place of 14/–.

3. Upon this principle, the 2 volumes of *Waverley* were settled *and paid* 12/– for *printing* per ream ; and 1/6 for *Hot-pressing*. Be pleased to mark this.

4. Now, however, Mr. Cadell refuses to pay for the hot-pressing, thrown into the bargain by others ; and therefore is determined to extort it from us under the penalty of withdrawing the work from our press.

5. We answer, we cannot submit to this ; and that it would be unjust and unfair to remove the work on any such grounds. No doubt, in the present distressed state of trade, he could get even greater concessions. But that was nothing to us. On the faith of an adopted estimate, we had laid out all our own, and much of our friends' money, to the extent of upwards of £4000, with a view to the Magnum alone ; and that, *all this being done*, his now insisting

[1] The " Magnum " was the term used among themselves by the publisher Cadell (whose enterprise it was), Ballantyne, and Scott, for the Collected Edition of the Waverley Novels. Magnum it truly was. As evidence of its success and Scott's popularity, it may be added that eight volumes were issued before the end of this year (1829), the monthly sales of which had reached as high as 35,000—this in addition to the sales of the individual editions of each work.

that we should agree to a measure which would be greatly *injurious* to us, under the threat of another which would be *ruinous* was unkind, unreasonable, and unjustifiable. . .

This, dear Sir Walter, is a brief statement of the point at issue ; but I inclose a copy of the Letter sent by us to the Trustees, and the Correspondence between Mr. Cadell and us. I know your dislike of such details ; but this is a truly serious matter to me and my family, and to those friends who have come forward to help me in my misfortunes. I only beg you to examine these documents, and then to do as you think fair, whatever may be the effect upon me. The truth is, and I say it without hesitation, that Mr. Cadell is as yet only feeling his way. He will, if he can, beat us down till we shall have the mere shadow of profit. Should his present unreasonable demand be acceded to, it would only make way for some new encroachment. He always has it in his power to say " Gentlemen, I can get the work done still cheaper. You must come down 20 p. cent. more or my duty to the concern will make me remove the work." And it is true he *could* get the work done much lower, by persons who, having no work, are willing to make any sort of concessions for employment. But he talks in this way too late. It would have been all quite right before we had laid out £4000, depending both on the stability of the price, and the permanency of the job. Then he would have been perfectly justifiable in going wherever he could get the thing done cheapest. But, surely, what was right then, is not [*sic*] right now. We have embarked more than our all to meet this employment, *and will be ruined* if it is taken away, or only retained by working for nothing.

Cadell against Ballantyne

From 14/– per ream, he has got us down to 12/–, and now meditates, by compelling us to hot-press for nothing, to lower that last charge to 10/6d ; or 20 per cent. below the original estimate. This is hard, surely. I have printed " Blackwood's Magazine " twelve years, and have never heard one word of deduction simply because he thinks our charges fair, and does not attempt to beat us down because he knows he could. This last sentence is not quite germain to the matter ; but it has slipt out, and I entreat you to forgive it. —I am, dear Sir Walter, most respectfully Yours,

JAMES BALLANTYNE.[1]

[P.S.] May I be, most deferentially, permitted to remind you that on the one [and] only occasion when anything like a scene

[1] As stated (page 352), this appeal of Ballantyne's to Scott was not in vain. Sir Walter wrote a tactful letter to Cadell, favoring Ballantyne's chief argument ; and recommending that a compromise be effected.

took place betwixt us on the subject of our disasters, you were pleased to say—and it was not without emotion—" Come, James, keep up, my good fellow Man, I'll never forsake you." These were the *ipsissima verba* ; and though I rather think I made no answer, I have clung to them, amidst worse miseries, as your heroine did to the rose-bud given to her in her extremity by the Dwarf. It is now my fate to proffer to you my rose-bud, I trust unwithered ; assuring you (and you have known me, for good and bad, upwards of 44 years) that upon my success in my appeal will depend, whether the remainder of my [life] will be past in some decent show of independence and comfort, or in a state of suffering as great as can be inflicted by power without feeling or fairness.

Touching appeal by Ballantyne

From Robert Cadell

EDINBURGH,
9 Novemr, 1830.

DEAR SIR,—I must, I find, now settle down to your being thirty-five miles from St. Andrew Square, but most grateful I am that you have refused a pension : it would never have done. Never ! I declare I would rather have given it to you myself, than have had your name associated with the Pension List, and the annual Votes of Parliament. Dear ! dear ! Would [not] we all have paid for it with our worthy Patrons the public—the pension best paid and sweetest when received is that flowing from your weary publisher. If Providence so wills it that you are preserved to your family, your friends and to the world for seven or ten years, rely on it the public shall in that time be induced to pay you a swinging pension.[1]

Five gallons of Whiskey go by tomorrow's carrier, many more may you call for, *and* many more I shall be right glad to send.—Always respectfully yours,

ROB. CADELL.

From the same

EDINBURGH,
6 Decemr, 1830.

DEAR SIR,—James Ballantyne has put a task upon me which he was much more able to undertake himself, but as he is slightly indisposed, I fancy I must indulge him. He is not very well pleased with the commencement of *Count Robert*, and, as usual, is somewhat alarmed. He asked my opinion on Saturday, and sent me the

[1] By December 1830 Scott reduced his debt from £130,000 to about £54,000.

pages already set up. The case is wholly different, as I allege to him, from the two short Tales of the Second *Chronicles of the Canongate.* Where we saw the whole, now we only see but a very small portion. In reply to this he says the author never fails to produce a charming book when the commencement is good, such as *The Talisman. The Betrothed* commenced very differently and was less popular. I honestly confess that in the few pages I have seen there appears to me nothing very alarming ; on the contrary, I was pleased with it—all but the names Pleuxippus &c. And there are farther objections of the stern printer ; he put it to me, and I certainly do recollect the remark, that Mr. Lockhart's admirable novel of *Valerius* was essentially injured, in general estimation, by the Roman names being associated in no way with our ideas of witty conversation or anything where light, amusing, or pleasing reading is concerned.

Objections to "Count Robert"

I must do Ballantyne the justice to say that he wished to delay the expression of his opinion till he had seen more of the MS. There I conceive he is wrong, and it is much better that you should know soon what his objections are in case you think them at all worth your attention.

I have come as near as I well can to what he wished me to say ; at the same time my own opinion clings to the names only, or rather is inclined against the names only ; and with this exception I see nothing at the commencement that may not turn out a charming romance. The simile at the opening is beautiful. It gives me pleasure to add that the great book [*i.e.*, the new Collected Edition or "Magnum"] moves off very fairly indeed. Notwithstanding the great sales made in October, 1600 back volumes were sold in November. Very respectfully yours,

ROB. CADELL.

[Scott was very upset by this letter, recent ill-health making him more sensitive to criticism than of old. He wrote to "My dear James" about it ; and more curtly to Cadell ". . . The subject is essentially an excellent one . . . but frankly, I cannot think of flinging aside the half-finished volume, as if it were a corked bottle of wine. If there is a decisive resolution for laying aside *Count Robert* . . . I shall not easily prevail on myself to begin another. . ." On Dec. 12 Sir Walter wrote again a dignified and pathetic protest ; and is almost resigned to abandoning the novel. After recalling his paralytic seizures, he adds :

"I have restricted myself yet farther, and have cut off the cigar, and almost half of the mountain-dew. Now, in the midst of all this, I began

my work with as much attention as I could; and having taken pains with my story, I find it is not relished, nor indeed tolerated by those who have no interest in condemning it, but a strong interest in putting even a face upon their consciences. Was not this, in the circumstances, a damper to an invalid, already afraid that the sharp edge might be taken off his intellect, though he was not himself sensible of that? and did it not seem, of course, that nature was rather calling for repose than for further efforts in a very exciting and feverish style of composition? It would have been the height of injustice and cruelty to impute want of friendship or sympathy to J. B.'s [*i.e.*, Ballantyne's] discharge of a doubtful, and I am sensible, a perilous task . . . but I never had the least thought of blaming him, and indeed my confidence in his judgment is the most forcible part of the whole affair. It is consciousness of his sincerity which makes me doubt whether I can proceed with the County Paris. . . Then being idle will never do, for a thousand reasons; all this I am thinking of till I am half sick."]

From the same

EDINBURGH,
15 Decem, 1830.

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you a short letter on Monday, and promised another before I got to Abbotsford; in the meantime I have your long and deeply interesting communication of Sunday [*i.e.*, the letter above quoted]. At first, I confess, it cast a gloom over me—a heavy gloom; but after sleeping and waking over it I have got greatly more cheerful. Your letter is one which I can look upon only as testifying a confidence in me for which I am very grateful, and what my merits scarcely entitle me to. It calls upon me, however, to strain every faculty to benefit you, to conceal no one feeling, no one opinion from you that may be of use in the present emergency. . .

I shall begin with a reference to your reply to my first letter (as to *Count Robert*) when Ballantyne was in bed. In the letter I allude to you say "we must do nothing to injure the Magnum." I do most pointedly say that if *Count Robert* is not popular, if it is not received with applause, if it is not received with more applause than any of its precursors up to the Tales of the Crusaders, it will injure the Magnum, and this injury will be done to 45 preceding volumes. The question comes to be: how to get over the present difficulty. The remedy appears to me to be to have the whole MS. completed before the work goes to press. If good, if pronounced by the stern Printer to be fitted to appear—let it appear; the effect upon the Magnum renders this plan one of absolute prudence. Towards yourself [it] is one of absolute justice. You seem now to feel yourself less equal to hard work. I assume this, for if Dr.

Cadell's "if's"

Abercromby restricts the aliment [*sic*] for the body we—the greedy booksellers and printers must not overwork the willing mind. If the body gets less to do, so must the mind ; and I am confident were you to proceed with *Count Robert* with the feeling that it might injure all its predecessors, you would get on far less cheerfully, of course far less successfully, than if you thought that what you have in hand shall cause no loss but loss of time.

Do not, I pray you, think that you *can be idle* altho' no new novel is on the Anvil ; there are the notes of the *Redgauntlet* and all after to *Anne of Geierstein* inclusive, occasional articles in the "Quarterly" and other Reviews, Reliquiae, Trottcosienses,[1] *Tales of a Grandfather*, and such light work as will keep your hand fully occupied, and your mind easily occupied. I have not a dread of your having full and constant occupation—I do pray, for many a day to come. But I own I have my fears of your grappling with and a noying yourself with a Work of Fiction in any other way than having one complete as a MS.

Upon the great general view it does by no means follow that the great operation of the Waverley Novels is to produce more money as a book in 50 volumes than a book in 45 vols. ; the additional number may have the appearance of the calculation of the Custom House and the Budget of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but the returns at the end may show that two and two do not make four. I do beg therefore that no gloom may rest on you on this account. It has been said by good and fair judges that any addition to the Novels might impare what are gone before, and create the question "How long is this to go on." My reply to this has been : the next one or two will be great and make a noble finish. Whether and how this finish is best to be brought about remains for mature consideration. . . I had written all that precedes this when Ballantyne called, and showed me your most cheerful letter to him of yesterday. My first inclination was to put the whole of the lucubrations in the fire, and recast the same ; but when I re-read them and consider the friendship of your long letter of Sunday, and the confidential candour on the face of it, I cannot bring myself to pass it over with a mere allusion to the points which, if not touched upon now, you might at an afterday say I had not met your plain unvarnished expression with the like

"Custom House" estimates

[1] *Or the Gabions of Jonathan Oldbuck*, the title given to the "sort of *catalogue raisonné*" which Cadell had suggested Sir Walter should compile of the most curious articles in his library and museum.

frankness. Glad indeed am [I] to see that you are to turn to the *Count* again. I trust there is nothing in what I have said that will tend to turn you aside from your present resolution. . .—Always your most Gratefully,

ROB. CADELL.

[Following this letter—which was endorsed by Scott—" The Bishop's Fist is in it. Vide *Gil Blas* "—Cadell and Ballantyne on Dec. 18th waited on Sir Walter at Abbotsford for a council with the brave, weary, and harassed author. There occurred the scene over the new Malachi Malagrowther pamphlet, which was got out of the way in the manner already noted; and—as the foregoing letter anticipates—Scott was encouraged to complete *Count Robert*. While the next few letters are passing, the novel is proceeding according to plan; and Lockhart looks forward to the publication of both *Count Robert* and the pamphlet.]

From John Gibson Lockhart

LONDON,
April 16, 1831.

MY DEAR SIR,—. . . Last night was an important one in the H. of C. Lord Howick, son of the premier, spoke on the W. Indies in a style so reckless that nothing would surprize me on the part of the planters—who are at this moment summoning a congress at Barbadoes. The Government have already withdrawn 2 regiments from Jamaica—and Jonathan is doing his best to tempt the Islanders. The Canadas, Sir Hd. Douglas says, would have revolted en masse if the Timber bill had passed; and, if the Reform bill do pass, that, it is on all hands admitted, must come next. I look on these puny puppies pulling the Empire to pieces, as well as the Constitution, with daily increase of wonder and alarm.

Meantime the gay world holds on. Whig and Tory alike, in one stream of seeming carelessness and of voluptuous levity. That persons with little but their brains and hands should be unable to look on without such feelings—while so many hollow blown up boobies, with so much to lose, and nothing to gain, continue staring about them with faces as innocent of meaning as of old—may well seem odd.

A growl from Lockhart

Yesterday at Morritt's we met a parcel of Fitzclarences and other courtierlings, and one would have thought the Nation was taken up with nothing but " my father's stud " and " the Queen's new cottage." They have pulled down George IV's lodge, and are erecting this Adelaide Cottage instead.

I wish *Count Robert* had come out these holy days when there was a lull about the Reform. Now it is all wild again, but the

reaction always follows and in a few weeks all the world will be enchanted to have something to change the topic.—Ever truly yours,

J. G. LOCKHART.[1]

From James Ballantyne P.O.

Saturday, April 23rd [1831].

DEAR SIR WALTER,—I send the Introduction to *Redgauntlet*, which you will find to require somewhat of your correcting hand.

It gives me great delight to hear that you are recovering fast from your late indisposition. I suspect it would do both yourself and your printer some good were both to pin their pledged word to some abstinence Society.[2] I can't at all afford to go off for a dozen years yet. Jack must be grown up to manage matters for the girls.—Most respectfully,

A bomb-shell for Scott

J. B.

From the same P.O.

April 28th, 1831.

DEAR SIR WALTER,—I plead guilty to having made a very bad joke, and in attempting any joke at all, feel that I have taken an undue freedom. But I beg to disclaim the stupid and impertinent purpose of getting you to become a member of a Temperance Society. I had no such stuff in my thoughts. So far from being myself a convert to any such folly, I continue to take my temperate tumbler regularly both after dinner and supper, and assuredly have neither the intention to discontinue it, nor any dread of being injured by it. I may, perhaps, attach too much value to life, though that, I think, can hardly be ; and I do not deny that I attach very great importance to yours. But I trust it will never lead me into any such insolent interference with your regulation of yourself as my want of taste has led you to conceive in the present instance.

I beg your pardon for this trouble, but my uneasiness under your misapprehension has led me to risk giving it, although I have no parcel to send my letter in.—Most respectfully,

J. BALLANTYNE.

[Endorsed by Scott]—James Ballantyne's apology.

[1] This letter, reminiscent of the country's agitation over the Reform Bill, is given to show Lockhart's anxiety on that subject, and his impatience for the publication of the much criticised novel.

[2] This to Scott ! who " at the Sunday board circulated the Champagne briskly during dinner, and considered a pint of claret each man's fair share afterwards . . . his Bourdeaux was uniformly preceded by a small libation of the genuine *mountain dew* " (Lockhart in the *Life*). What was Scott's reply we can only guess, but that it was full strength may be imagined from Ballantyne's hasty rejoinder, following.

From John Gibson Lockhart

LONDON,
May 2, 1831.

MY DEAR SIR,—Your letter received this morning was a great cordial, and I am sure if I do not leave town on Saturday for Abbotsford it will not be for want of every exertion on my part to get things into such a train as may admit of my departure. At all events, in not many days I shall, *Deo volente*, appear. I trust Sophia and the children are with you ere this, and am sure you will think the little ones improved since you saw them. Thank God they are still all-over babies. . .

Lockhart wants the pamphlet

I am afraid to say much as to your patriotic scheme of another Malagrowtherism, because I think Dr. Abercrombie should be consulted surely before you buckle to anything requiring an effort. You cannot, however, if you would, be idle, and therefore I daresay he will be of opinion that what pleases your own fancy most is that which maybe the wisest thing to set about. No question, your voice raised on the right side would have a great effect even now—*Si pergama dextra &c.* I should think the printing ought to go on at Edinburgh wherever you ultimately publish, but that it would be well to publish at once in both places. Whether or not you should revive the name of Malachi, or, considering the gravity of the occasion, put forth your own *literatim* may be doubted. I incline to the latter scheme ; but hope to be in time not only to talk over that question, but to relieve you of the bother of correcting the sheets. . . Ever truly yours,

J. G. L.

[Interspersed with the foregoing correspondence are many letters received by Sir Walter from Cadell, dated variously between Jan. 1, 1831, and May 2, 1831, encouraging the continuance of the novel. For example, he writes: Feb. 28 " . . . *Count Robert* seems to get on most gallantly. It is full of the most gorgeous description. . ." March 19th " . . . I feel confident that it [will] be a great hit. . ." May 2 " . . . I hope to have him out this month. . ." Then come these letters :]

From Robert Cadell

EDINBURGH,
6 May, 1831.

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Ballantyne has made an appeal to me to-day as to the incident near to the conclusion of *Count Robert*, and I cannot but say that I agree with him in every particular. I beg and entreat of you to reconsider what Mr. Ballantyne points at ; when he and I were at Abbotsford last, you did not yield to the views we

then and now entertain as to Brenhilda when she first appears likely to become a mother.

But I confess the combat and what follows have cast a gloom over me which I cannot get rid of. It is not much my way to make many apologies for saying what is my honest opinion, and on the present occasion I know you will give me no credit for them were I to deviate from my former course. But I do most earnestly place before you the consequences of a break down with *Count Robert*—that it will injure all your works to the extent of many thousand pounds cannot be for a moment doubted, but to your inestimable health it will be far more injurious than thousands can restore. It will chagrin and disappoint you of itself, and to this will, as sure as I now write, be added a great falling-off in the sequel of our present great undertaking.

The composition appears to my poor wits to be excellent, better you never wrote ; but it is the incident that is damning. I would be the last person living to put you to any unnecessary trouble, but trouble—I know you would say afterwards—is nothing compared to the pain of having committed a great fault, or I might call it a great blot, and not be told of it. But the book is so near a close that the trouble would be but slight, very slight. All, nearly, up to the Combat might do, but I look to certain shipwreck if *it* remains as it is now. I am the more opposed at all this from my anxiety to have the *Count* as " a trot for the avenue," this at small labour you can still make it to have ; and I do hope you will, on this occasion, hear your two friendly, but I assure you, honest critics, and hear them with that calmness and that clear perception so eminently your own on all important occasions. I shall say no more, but enclose Ballantyne's note. I trust you keep stout. Pray do not let this annoy you, it will all come to good.—Yours respectfully,

A damning incident

ROB. CADELL.

From the same

EDINBURGH,
9 May, 1831.

DEAR SIR,—The sight of your handwriting always gives me pleasure, and really it is very good of you to listen to us pedlars. I shall forthwith hold a bed of justice with Ballantyne, who, I am sorry to say, is smartly unwell, and let you know our wise resolves as to *Count Robert* ; to give you as little trouble as possible will be our chief consideration.

I cannot help deploring once more that you trouble your head with politics. They are not worth your while; the river is in flood at present, and no one man, not even the King himself, can stop it. Many will incite you, many will hurry you on, but the kicklers and clappers of hands will not consider that the gallant actor may hurt himself, and probably may come in for a kick from some cart nag with not a drop of breeding in his carcass.

I have one favour to beg; that, as a publishing bookseller having no politics, you will let me bring out this *brochure.* I will be the greatest sufferer, saving yourself. I would so regulate the publication of the pamphlet as to let *Count Robert* have his swing before the other appears. My reason for stating this is that any publication on Reform is too late for the General Election, and would be better when Parliament is about to assemble. £1,000 will not cover my loss if the pamphlet jars with the *Count,* and many more thousands will never see either of our pockets by its effect upon your works.

Oh! how much rather I would see you completing the notes to the Novels. This would give you light work and peace of mind. The idea even of one more being finished would help you amazingly; the other affair will vex and annoy you, remove to a greater distance the completion of the Notes, and take from the value of your works all the gold the Notes and Introductions added to them. But I shall say no more on this score. Thus much I have said; I have raised my still small voice, but it is the voice of one who wishes you well in every particular.—Always respectfully yours,

ROB. CADELL.

From the same

EDINBURGH,
30 August, 1831.

DEAR SIR,—. . . *Count Robert of Paris.* It will not do to be fainthearted about this worthy Knight; the title is good, the public have long had it before them, the pillaged extract is fortunately a very happy bit and will create an interest for the whole. I have throughout looked upon the whole nearly of the first two volumes as good—the blot, as it humbly appears to me of the latter part, is the *amazon getting enceinte.*[1] It is bold of me to say so, but this is the fault. The balance of the work after the introduction of this incident is rather more than a Volume, but it is almost all in print or in proof, and I think that one short week of your uncommon industry would castrate all this bairn affair and bring

A week's castrating urged

[1] *i.e.*, Brenhilda.

the randy wife to the battle field, sword in hand to meet all comers.[1]

Looking at the whole of your vast labours, their importance to you and your family, it would be of the greatest consequence to give vir to this, probably the last of your collected works of fiction, and thus essentially benefit the whole 50 volumes. . . Yours most respectfully,

ROB. CADELL.

[Subsequent to the foregoing letter Lockhart wrote to Scott (Feb. 22nd, 1831): "I suspect Cadell, however kindly disposed, cannot quite lay aside his trade's views, and works you rather too much." He concludes by asking "When are we to see *Count Robert*?"; and saying that a review by Scott "would be a most welcome thing to the Q.R." (*i.e.*, his "Quarterly Review"). The novel was published at the close of November, 1831. This group of hitherto unpublished letters and passages—with their new light on the unhappy circumstances attending the author's great effort—is concluded, although a few months out of chronological order, with the following letter from Sir Walter's elder son. It must have been a great comfort to the harassed father.]

From Walter Scott, Jun. BIRMINGHAM,
1st January, 1831.

DEAR PAPA,—I have read over your letter attentively, and given it every consideration and altho' I have not the slightest doubt that 1833 will find you not only completely free of all pecuniary difficulties, but also in the full possession of health and spirits, to enable you to rest upon your oars and enjoy the fruits of your exertions. Still, as you wish it, I shall tell you what I think of your proposal for a settlement for Anne and Charles. In the first place, I must say, I should be very sorry indeed to see the Library broken up, or Abbotsford in any way altered from its present state; and therefore, if you chuse, I would rather that a valuation was put upon the Books, pictures, cabinets, arms, curiosities &c., so as to enable me, by paying down the sum at which the valuation is made, to retain them; of course this has nothing to do with what books or other matters you might wish to leave to Lockhart or Charles, but only applies to the breaking up of the Library altogether. If I make no use of it, others may afterwards; and I should most certainly like to see the house left for others in the same state as when you possessed it. It may be a considerable outlay of money for me, but surely it is much better for me to spend the money in

Abbotsford must be saved

[1] The delicate operation seems to have been performed, for I find no bairn in the story, although the "cut" can be detected.

a way that will benefit both my brothers and sisters than to make a great outlay to refurnish and refit the house in a manner which never could afford me the hundredth part of the satisfaction that it would give me if left in the original style. It is clear enough that I can do this without any very great difficulty, as Lochore is a place which I never shall go to and shall dispose of to the 1st good bidder that will always give a good sum of ready money. My Commission, if peace continues and that I sell out, is worth a very large sum, and then there is always some money from Mrs. Carpenter. In short, put what valuation you please upon the furniture, Library &c., and you may rest assured that it will always meet my most ready and cordial acquiescence. Should any unfortunate events prevent my being able to come down with the amount of the valuation, then they can be sold; but I think it would go hard with me but I would manage it. With regard to Charles and Anne, one or both shall always be our inmates, and their interests mine—and particularly Anne who, if she does not find with us all the luxuries she has been accustomed to, will at least have everything in common with us. On this point pray make yourself perfectly easy, for as long as I live I shall be to her all that a brother can be. Having now, in as few words as possible, explained my wishes on a painful subject, I must congratulate you on the success of your literary labours, wish you all the compliments of the season, and trust that this day two years we shall all meet at Abbotsford and celebrate the arrival of the New Year which may free you from all difficulties.[1]

Matters are tolerably quiet here. Mr. Hunt[2] makes his public entry into the town to-morrow, but I have no doubt all will go on quietly. We are in daily expectations of moving either for Manchester or Nottingham. One Squadron has already gone to Nottingham, and perhaps next week may send us back to Sheffield. However, I intend going to Brighton for a month or six weeks, and shall pay my respects to His Majesty. An order came down to-day for twenty additional horses for the Regiment. Blind mortals that we are, we always thought the Whigs our enemies, and they turn out our best friends. With love to Anne, to whom I shall write in a day or two, believe me, your affectionate son,

W. SCOTT.

[1] Sir Walter Scott died on Sept. 21st, 1832. The object of the hopes and fears and troubles of his last years, the full settlement of the remaining debt in connection with his Ballantyne business, was achieved the following year, largely by an advance payment on account of the profits of his literary exertions.

[2] *i.e.*, Henry Hunt, the popular agitator, associated with the "Peterloo Massacre" (see also page 279).

TO A GALLANT KNIGHT

TO A GALLANT KNIGHT

There are a number of Odes and also Addresses in Verse to Sir Walter Scott in his Letter-Books. From all over the British Isles and Germany and France they came—good, bad, and indifferent. The following may fitly round off this selection of letters and documents. The modesty of the " Nameless Admirer " debarred him from knowing the compliment paid to his tribute when Sir Walter, with equal modesty, endorsed the letter-sheet—" Good verses on a sorry Subject."

[May 30, 1825.]

TO SIR WALTER SCOTT

As when before assembled bands
  The tilts in days of yore were run,
Thousands of people clapped their hands
  When one brave deed they witnessed done ;

—For many men are so far bold
  That they are pleased at heart to view
A noble act, or hear it told,
  Although the like they dare not do ;—

So thousands have admired in thee
  Thoughts which they else had never known,
As proud that they their value see
  Almost, as if they were their own.

As when the man-at-arms beheld
  The plume amid the battle move
Of knight, by the pure flame impelled
  Of honour and of lady's love,

And saw the deadly blows he dealt,
  And how the crowds of foemen swerved,
His sluggish blood flow quick he felt,
  His arm unwonted vigour nerved,

And forth the brand that would have slept
  But for his leader's deeds, he drew,
And to the combat headlong leapt,
  Resolved to win him glory too ;

So when I read thy deathless lays,
  In dreams of high aspiring tranced,
No line but is a voice which says,
  " Go get thee what of fame thou canst."

A Nameless Admirer.

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In the Letters, incomplete references are made—as often happens in correspondence—to persons, places, and events, well enough understood between the parties. Where necessary, in this Index particulars have been added to entries, in order to facilitate identification, and to obviate the need of footnotes in the text.

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